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THE

HISTORY

AND

PRESENT STATE

OF THE TOWN OF

NEWBURYPORT,

BY CALEB CUSHING.

Hic aræ sunt, hic foci, hic dii penates.

Cic. pro Domo sua.

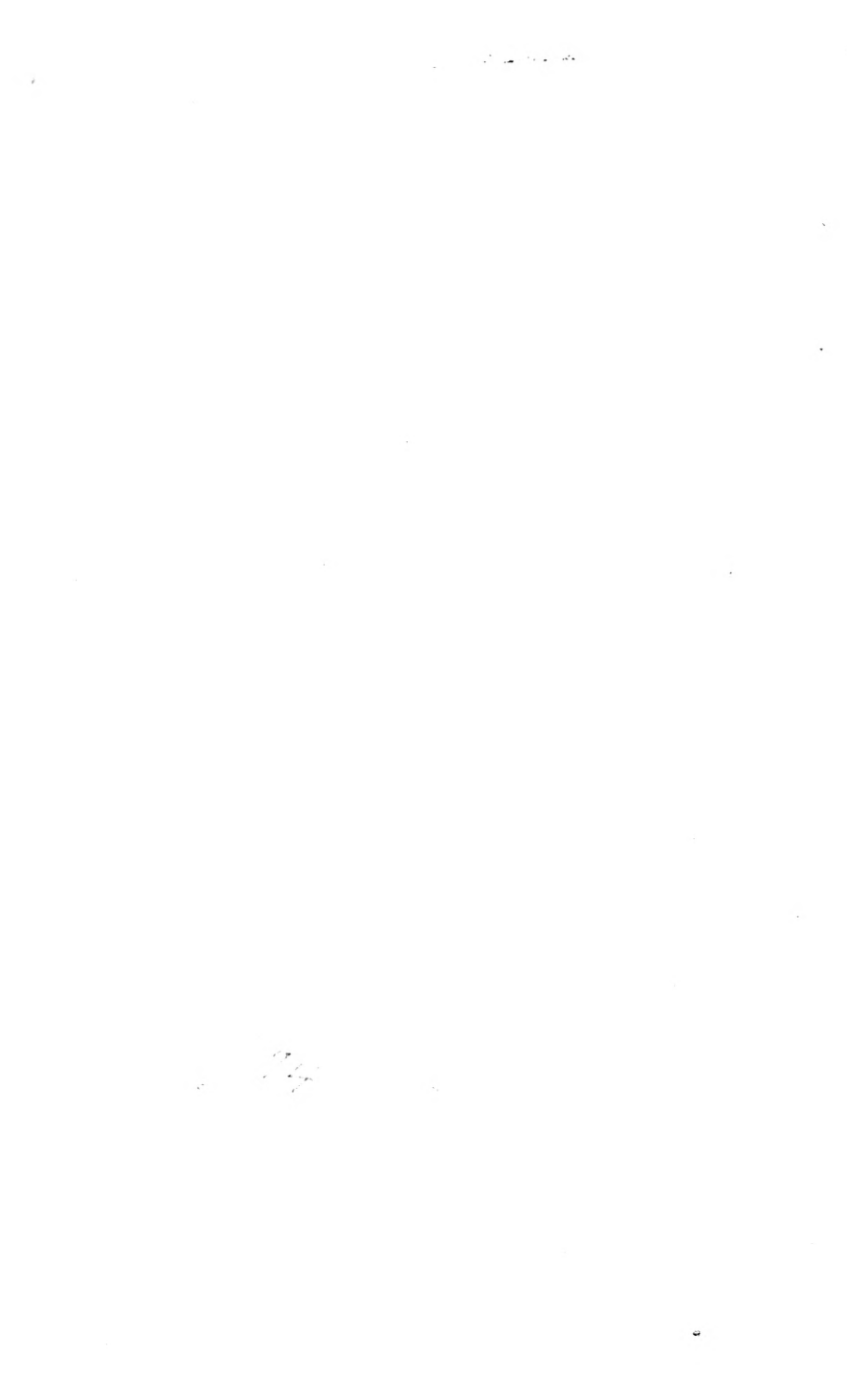


Newburyport.

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1826



To

the Inhabitants of

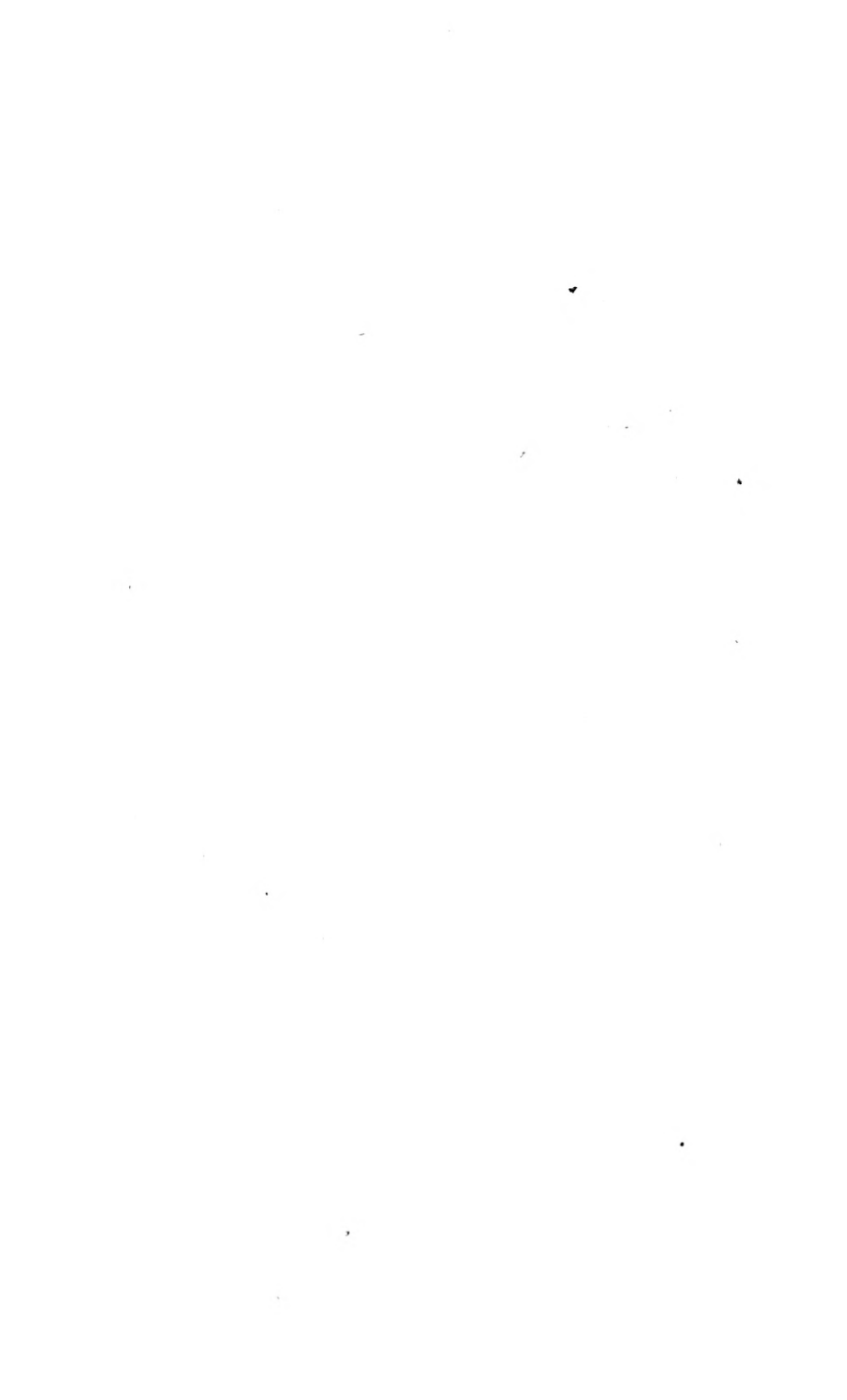
NEWBURYPORT,

these pages

are respectfully inscribed

by their grateful fellow citizen,

C. CUSHING.



PREFACE.

THE author of the ensuing account was led to project the compilation of it several years ago, by perusing, in the Town Records of Newburyport, many facts and documents, which seemed to possess permanent historical value. Other pursuits distracted him from the work at the time; and he is compelled to plead them now, in extenuation of its unavoidable imperfections.

The history of a single town must, of necessity, consist chiefly of local incidents, and information of limited range. But however narrow the scope of such a work, it ought, being wholly domestic in its nature, to contain matters of interest to *ourselves* at least, and the author expects nothing more from the result of his labor.—And in reference to this point, he would repeat the remarks, which he formerly made in announcing his design.*

The causes of the wealth and grandeur of nations are always considered with curiosity, both on account of their intrinsic importance, and of the splendid scenes, by which they are accompanied. The pomp of war, and triumph, the deeds of distinguished patriots, a thousand diversified events, impart dignity and interest to the fate of a mighty people. But the history of small and subordinate communities is less attractive, because the circumstances, which it commemorates, are not in their nature so grand or various, nor so capable of evoking admiration. Hence we seldom feel so lively a desire to know the particular events, which elevate or depress towns, as we do to study the political state of nations. Nay, we sometimes go farther, and neglect what is near, for the sake of what is remote; and leave the concerns of the place in which we dwell, to inquire into those with which we have no connexion, and are more anxious to hear of the happiness of foreigners, than to become acquainted with what may promote our own immediate prosperity.

It is apparent that, in pursuing such a course, we do ourselves injustice. Towns are nothing but elements of nations, and whatever affects the latter affects the former in the same degree. Besides, the prosperous situation of all the lesser divisions of a state is essential to the true greatness of the state itself: and therefore, in examining the character of towns, we become insensibly led upwards to that of nations. And the several things, which tend to promote the well-being of petty communities, are the same in nature, although not in extent, with those, which give wealth to the most opulent empires. Commercial and manufac-

* Newburyport Herald, January 3, 1822.

flourishing industry, and sage laws, are as beneficial to towns as to whole countries; and in both, the ravages of war, the force of luxury, corruption, and profuseness are alike detrimental.

It should be considered, likewise, that the prosperity of a town, in which we live, is ultimately connected with our happiness and pecuniary advancement. If the expenses of that town are large and its affairs in a bad situation, we directly feel the pressure of those circumstances in our own persons. And, on the contrary, if its municipal concerns are in a good condition, ours will be the advantage of it. Our private interest is also deeply concerned in the price of lands, and the profitableness of labor, in the place of our abode, because, in proportion as they rise or fall, must the value of our own property be exalted or depreciated.— And if the industry of our town is flourishing, its population increasing, its expenditures few and light, and the demand for land or buildings constant, we ourselves are instantly and permanently benefited.

And certainly if there was nothing curious in the facts themselves, and nothing which affected our personal interest, we should nevertheless have a desire to know the situation of the place in which we were born, or have been educated, or live. We must experience a pleasure in finding it prosper, and pain in perceiving it decline. We must feel an attachment to what is more emphatically our native land. Whatever interest we may take in a country for the reason that it is our country, ought to work with greater strength, in attaching us to the home, where we have enjoyed the pleasures of domestic life and of social endearment,

Besides, in many countries, and no where more remarkably than here, the history of towns is a very important part of the history of the nation. By towns, in their corporate capacity, were many of the most heroic resolutions adopted, and many of the most daring enterprises undertaken, which signalized our revolutionary struggle. These things can best be preserved from oblivion by the humble efforts of individuals in the different towns, who will and can bestow their attention upon subjects so simple and unpretending.

Such are the considerations, which have induced to this publication. In issuing it from the press, the author would thus publicly declare his obligations, and offer his sincere thanks, to many persons, who have kindly furnished him with various facts, and without whose aid he could not have accomplished his purpose.

Most of the statements in the work are copied from manuscript records of the town, of the several parishes, and of various corporations and societies. Many things were obtained from verbal information, for which no written or printed document could be cited. And the reader will understand that, where no public authority for any fact is adduced, it was derived either from manuscripts, or from communication with individuals.

The author cannot flatter himself that he has given a complete account of the town, its business, or its associations. Some of these, such as the fire-clubs and engine societies, he found it necessary to omit entirely; and others he is conscious may be imperfectly described. But the nature of the subject, requiring the collection of so many and such various scattered particulars, will, it is hoped, be received in part for his apology, should any essential omissions be discovered.

During the progress of the work through the press, the author has been gratified to learn that persons in other parts of the county have turned their attention to the subject of town-histories, and that materials are fast collecting for a complete history of the ancient and respectable county of Essex. The Essex Historical Society is capable of accomplishing much good in reference to such an object.

With these prefatory observations, he submits to his fellow-citizens a plain, unadorned narration of the fortunes of their town:—for which he has adopted the most economical form of publication, in order to place it within the reach of all who take interest in the subject.

NEWBURYPORT, September 15, 1826.

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HISTORICAL SKETCH.

THE town of Newburyport is distinguished for the beauty of its appearance, and the regularity with which it is laid out, on the gentle slope of the banks of the Merrimac. Commanding a great extent of fertile country by means of that river, it rapidly grew up into wealth and rank in the flourishing period of our commercial prosperity, no less remarkable for the pious and industrious habits of its citizens, than for its healthful and commodious situation. Although its harbor was seriously injured by the sand-bar at the mouth of the river, yet the spirit and enterprise of its merchants seemed to compensate for this evil, so that its wharves were crowded with shipping, and its store-houses filled with the merchandise of every quarter of the world. The numerous forests of timber, through which the river flowed, made ship-building a never failing source of riches to the town, and a profitable art for its inhabitants to exercise.

As a sea-port, every thing connected with navigation, and all the numberless employments which commerce creates, were carried to great perfection in it, and tended to give it increasing importance. But there was one species of trade, for which the town was especially fitted, namely, intercourse with the French West India Islands. This intercourse was constant and profitable, and not only furnished a market for the produce of the country, but opened several other kinds of business, such as that of distilling rum, and of a carrying trade for English manufactures.

All these circumstances so much enlarged the population of the place where the town is now situated, that, in the year 1764, it was separated from Newbury, of which it then formed a part, and incorporated by the name of NEWBURYPORT. In the troublesome period

which ensued, the people of the town signalized their patriotism and love of independence by consenting to the non-importation agreement, declaring their abhorrence of the stamp-act, and other arbitrary measures of the ministry, preparing the means of defence and warfare, resolving to support the declaration of independence with their lives and fortunes, and nobly keeping this resolution inviolate. Few parts of the country voluntarily sacrificed more in proportion for the sake of freedom than did Newburyport, in submitting to have its staple business of ship-building broken up, incurring large debts for the defence of the harbor, weakening its population for the supply of the continental armies, and undergoing many other privations and embarrassments attendant on a state of protracted warfare. The citizens gained a little, and but a little, by privateering: and in other respects, the town stood almost still during the war and until the peace restored its commercial advantages.

The records of the town contain many documents, which throw light on the sentiments and exertions of its inhabitants during the eventful period of the Revolution. The existence of Newburyport, as a distinct corporation, was but just commenced, when the disputes between the metropolis and her colonies had reached such a height, as to threaten a speedy issue in open violence; and although the colonists might not, in 1764, have anticipated that they should be independent before the expiration of ten short years, yet observing and discerning men must have perceived that this event was every day becoming more and more probable, because both England and America were assuming too high a ground to admit of a peaceful continuance of their old relations.

Among the oldest papers preserved in the town records is a copy of the instructions given to Dudley Atkins, ancestor of one of the most respected families in Newbury, and the representative of Newburyport in the General Court of the Province. These instructions, which were voted at a town-meeting holden October 21st 1765, plainly show the state of public feeling at the time, and how early the spirit of resistance

was fostered in the bosom of every little municipal corporation. A few weeks before, on occasion of the passing of the ever memorable stamp-act, it had been voted—

“That the late act of parliament called the stamp-act is very grievous; and that this town, as much as in them lies, will endeavor the repeal of the same in all lawful ways :

“That it is the desire of the town that no man in it will accept of the office of distributing the stamped papers, as he regards the displeasure of the town; and that they will deem the person accepting of such office an enemy of his country.”

The instructions above alluded to fully explain the design of these votes, and the views by which the inhabitants were actuated. After adverting to the right of the people to instruct their representatives, and remarking upon the liberality of the English constitution, the instructions proceed :

“We have the most loyal sentiments of our gracious king, and his illustrious family; we have the highest reverence and esteem for that most august body, the Parliament of Great Britain; and we have an ardent affection for our brethren at home; we have always regarded their interests as our own, and esteemed our own prosperity as necessarily united with theirs. Hence it is that we have the greatest concern at some measures adopted by the late ministry, and some late acts of parliament, which we apprehend in their tendency will deprive us of some of our essential and high-prized liberties. The stamp-act, in a peculiar manner, we esteem a grievance, as by it we are subjected to a heavy tax, to which are annexed very severe penalties; and the recovery of forfeitures, incurred by the breach of it, is in a manner, which the English constitution abhors, that is, without a trial by jury, and in a court of admiralty. That a people should be taxed at the will of another, whether of one man or many, without their own consent, in person or by representative, is rank slavery.

* * * * *

“That these measures are contrary to the constitu-

tional right of Britons cannot be denied; and that the British inhabitants of America are not in every respect entitled to the privileges of Britons, even the patrons of the most arbitrary measures have never yet advanced.

"We have been full and explicit on this head, as it seems to be the fundamental point in debate; but was the tax in itself ever so constitutional, we cannot think but at this time it would be very grievous and burdensome.

"The embarrassments on our trade are great, and the scarcity of cash arising therefrom is such, that by the execution of the stamp-act, we should be drained in a very little time of that medium: the consequence of which is, that our commerce must stagnate, and our laborers starve.

"These, sir, are our sentiments on this occasion; nor can we think that the distresses we have painted are the creatures of our own imagination.

* * * * *

"We therefore the freeholders and other inhabitants of this town, being legally assembled, take this opportunity to declare our just expectations from you, which are,

"That you will, to the utmost of your ability, use your influence in the General Assembly that the rights and privileges of this Province may be preserved inviolate; and that the sacred deposit, we have received from our ancestors, may be handed down, without infringement, to our posterity of the latest generations:

"That you endeavor that all measures, consistent with our loyalty to the best of kings, may be taken to prevent the execution of the above grievous innovations; and that the repeal of the stamp-act may be obtained by a most dutiful, and at the same time most spirited, remonstrance against it.

"That you do not consent to any new or unprecedented grants, but endeavor that the greatest frugality and economy may take place in the distribution of the public monies, remembering the great expense the war has involved us in, and the debt incurred thereby, which remains undischarged.

"That you will consult and promote such measures,

as may be necessary, in this difficult time, to prevent the course of justice from being stayed, and the commerce of the Province standing still :

“ That if occasion shall offer, you bear testimony in behalf of this town against all seditious and mobbish insurrections, and express our abhorrence of all breaches of the peace ; and that you will readily concur in any constitutional measures, that may be necessary to secure the public tranquillity.”

It appears that the town participated as a corporation in the universal rejoicings which followed the repeal of the stamp act. And although the confidence of the country in the metropolis could not be fully restored ; yet the following document shows that it was not quite extinguished. It is in answer to a circular from Boston, proposing a non-importation agreement,— which seemed to the town a little premature. The paper is from the pen of John Lowell, and was adopted at a meeting holden March 10th, 1768.

“ The committee, &c. beg leave to report, that they are of opinion that the subjects therein contained deserve the most serious attention of this town in particular, as well as of the public in general.

“ This town has been in a great measure supported for many years past by the building of ships, which have been purchased mostly by the inhabitants, and for the use of Great Britain. The manner in which we have been paid for our ships has been mainly by British manufactures. So that the importation and purchase of these, and our staple business, if we may so express it, have been almost inseparably united.

“ It is with the greatest difficulty, that a number of people, who have for the most part of their lives been used to a particular employment, can suddenly strike into a new channel, and carry on a business to which they have always been strangers.

“ Hence, though we highly respect the town of Boston for its zealous attachment to the liberties of the country, and are ready to assist them in all measures to which prudence may direct, we cannot think it can consist with the prudence and policy of this town to join in their particular resolutions respecting the importation

and purchase of the enumerated articles of British manufacture.

"And not only from this principle, but from one less selfish, we cannot wish that the frequent and mutual intercourse which has hitherto subsisted between Great Britain and us should abate. 'Tis but of late date that we regarded Great Britain with all the respectful affection of a child to its parent; and though, by some late measures, which we conceive to be highly misjudged, there seems to have arisen a cloud, which obscures the true interests of the nation from the eyes of those at helm, we cannot but expect, as well as impatiently desire, that it will be soon removed, and a mutual confidence be established on the firmest foundation.

"In the mean time, as jealousy, in a constitution like the British, is the great preserving principle, we think it necessary to be watchful against any encroachments on our rights as Englishmen or freemen, and to be uniformly and resolutely determined that these shall not be infringed, while our fortunes, or even our lives, continue."

Happily for us the British ministry persisted in their infatuated course of impolicy and injustice, in consequence whereof, in the autumn of the same year (1768) the merchants in the Province entered into the famous non-importation agreement, by which they became mutually bound not to import, nor to purchase if imported, any British goods before January, 1776, or until the revenue laws were repealed by Parliament. At a meeting September 4th, 1769, the town approved of this agreement, voted to further and maintain the same, and to consider any person who should evade it an enemy of his country, and chose a committee to carry it into execution. At another meeting in the same month it was voted to return thanks to the merchants and others of Boston for their patriotic and noble spirit in their agreement respecting the non-importation of goods from Great Britain. The next March also it was voted by the town not to buy or use any foreign tea. And in the April following (Apl. 3, 1770,) a town-meeting was called, in consequence of some suspicion that a wagon-load of tea had been brought into town, when the vote of March was

repeated and a committee of ten was appointed to watch over its enforcement. At the same meeting, a series of resolutions were passed, which stated that this committee was chosen for the reason assigned; and that unless the traders, violating the agreement, should deliver up their goods to be kept until the agreement was annulled, and promise to abide by it in future, the committee were to publish their names as "enemies of their country," and lay the whole before the town. The merchants had agreed to permit goods to be taken in exchange for ships; but as it was feared that this privilege had been abusively made a cover for other transactions, the committee was instructed to prevent such abuses, and to treat the guilty as importers. And as the town thought it necessary to refrain entirely from the use of foreign teas, the committee was directed to prepare a paper for those to sign, who consented to refrain, and to lay before the town the names of the recusants, as well as those who entered into but violated the agreement.

At a town meeting, January 1st, 1773, it was

"Voted, that capt. Jonathan Greenleaf, our representative, be acquainted that it is the desire and expectation of this town, that he will persevere with steadiness and resolution in conjunction with his brethren in the honorable House of Representatives, to use his utmost endeavors to procure a full and complete redress of all our public grievances; and to do every thing in his power in order that the present and succeeding generations may have the full enjoyment of those privileges and advantages, which naturally and necessarily result from our glorious constitution. This we esteem a matter of the highest concernment, and we recommend it to him, to join with his brethren in the honorable House, at the approaching session, if they shall think it proper, to lay before lord Dartmouth, one of his majesty's secretaries of state, in a decent, respectful address, a full state of of our public grievances, and to intreat his lordship's favor and influence in behalf of an injured and oppressed people."—

In the course of this year, it appears that the correspondence of the several towns began to grow more

and more close, as the impending danger increased; and meetings were holden repeatedly for the purpose of confirming and strengthening the strict union, which all now saw to be necessary. The following letter to the Boston Committee of Correspondence, adopted at a town meeting held December 20th, 1775, speaks in the tone of boldness and defiance, which was speedily followed by an appeal to arms.

"It is with astonishment that we reflect on the unremitted efforts of the British ministry and Parliament to fasten infamy and ruin upon these Colonies. They not only claim a right to control and tax us at their pleasure, but are practising every species of fraud, as well as violence, their deluded minds can suppose feasible, to support and establish this absurd and injurious claim. A fresh instance we have in the plan lately adopted for supplying the Colonies with tea. If the money thus unconstitutionally taken from us, was to be expended for our real benefit and advantage; still it would be grievous; as the method of obtaining it is of a dangerous nature and fatal tendency. But we lose all patience when we consider that the industrious Americans are to be stript of their honest earnings to gratify the humors of lawless and ambitious men, and to support in idleness and luxury a parcel of worthless parasites, their creatures and tools, who are swarming thick upon us, and are already become a notorious burden to the community. We are sorry that any, who call themselves Americans, are hardy enough to justify such unrighteous proceedings; they surely deserve the utmost contempt and indignation of all honest men throughout the world: for our part, we shall endeavor to treat them according to their deserts. By the public prints we are favored with the sentiments of several respectable towns in the Province, expressed in a number of manly, sensible, and spirited resolves, with respect to the evils immediately before us. We are under great obligations to our worthy friends and brethren, who have nobly stood forth in this important cause: we assure them, that, should they need our assistance on any emergency, we determine most readily to exert our utmost abilities in every manly and laudable way our wisdom may dictate

for the salvation of our country, even at the hazard of our lives; and trusting through the favor of a kind providence we shall be able to frustrate all the designs of our enemies."

When the Provincial Congress assembled at Philadelphia in 1774, the town made the following representation of its circumstances and wishes. It was voted

"That this town confiding entirely in the wisdom and firmness of the general Congress of deputies from the several Colonies in America, which is to meet in Sept. next at Philadelphia, is determined and now resolves to abide by, and to the utmost of their power fully comply with, the final determination of said Congress, let the sacrifice be ever so great.

"That although this town, by their vote the aforesaid day, is willing to stop all trade for the sake of obtaining more speedy and effectual relief, notwithstanding, as it may seem more expedient to the Congress, that some trades and branches of commerce may be entirely stopped, and others permitted; or that certain exceptions or non-importation agreements may be made, which all the provinces should equally or proportionally partake of; unless an immediate prejudice to the common cause is the consequence, this town would desire the favor of the delegates chosen by this Province to attend the Congress; that our trade and commerce may be preserved in the same state and with the same indulgencies as that of the other provinces. And the town would beg leave to acquaint them, that the chief branches of its business are importations from Great-Britain, a large trade to the French West-India Islands; distilleries, which are numerous; and ship-building; and if any exceptions are made in the importations into this Province, or any particular towns thereof, that this town may have the same indulgencies."

But however anxious the inhabitants of the town might be to preserve their commerce from complete annihilation, it is manifest that their love of liberty was the paramount motive, which influenced their actions. The following instructions, given to Jonathan Greenleaf, the representative of the town in the General Court of 1774, exhibit a spirit which cannot be mistaken.

"The town of Newburyport have again chosen you for their representative in the General Assembly, and though they apprehend your opportunity of acting in that capacity may be very short, they do however repose in you an important trust.

"Since the dissolution of the late General Assembly great and surprising innovations have been attempted to be made in the constitution of this Province. The bills, that have passed the British Parliament, for their better regulating, as they absurdly express it, the civil government, and for the impartial administration of justice among us, are of such a nature as to alarm, not only the inhabitants of this Province, but all the British American Colonies. We should come short of our duty, if on this occasion we failed to express our utter abhorrence at the principles, on which those bills have been constructed, as well as the tenor of them, and the mode in which they are attempted to be carried into execution. If the Parliament of Great Britain have a rightful authority to make these statutes, it is evident that we hold our estates, our liberties, and even our lives at their arbitrary will and pleasure; than which nothing can be more absurd and chimerical. These bills, which are designed to annihilate our constitution established by charter, and to deprive us of those privileges, which are founded on the still higher principles of natural right and justice, have been passed, without our having so much as a hearing on this occasion, by persons directly interested in the execution of them, as they are manifestly calculated to increase their power and authority, and proportionably to lessen our weight and importance: and should they proceed on this plan, and we be so infatuated as to acquiesce, they will exalt themselves to absolute tyrants, and reduce us to a state of the most ignominious and abject slavery. The pernicious nature and tendency of these acts must be obvious to all, who consider the enormous powers they are designed to lodge in the hands of the governor: most of our civil officers are to be entirely dependant on his will, both for their appointment and continuance in office. This circumstance, considering the manner in which our juries are to be appointed, leaves the subject no assurance

that he shall have a fair and impartial determination in every cause relating to life, liberty or property, unless it happens to consist with the views and inclination of the governor: which is surely a most hazardous situation, especially as the governor now depends entirely on the crown for his appointment and support, and must therefore be ever ready to execute the purposes of the ministry. And in these unhappy circumstances we may not, if these acts are of sufficient authority to prevent it, assemble together, even in the most quiet and orderly manner, to devise means to procure a redress of our grievances; and, if we should, our so doing, it seems, is to be deemed seditious, and perhaps treasonable. The methods taken by the promoters of these bills to enforce them shew that they were themselves so sensible of the odious nature of them, as that they were not trusted to their own authority, or to a conviction of their being just and right, for the execution of them; but armed ships and armed men are the arguments to compel our obedience; and the more than implicit language, that these utter, is, that we must submit or die. But God grant that neither of these may be our unhappy fate. We design not madly to brave our own destruction, and we do not thirst for the blood of others; but reason and religion demand of us that we guard our invaluable rights at the risque of both.

“We would, therefore, now direct and instruct you to do nothing that shall in the least degree imply a submission to these acts; that you do in no way whatever acknowledge the authority of those persons, who are cruelly and perfidiously assisting to destroy their country, by assuming the character of counsellors of this province, not being appointed thereto but in an arbitrary and unconstitutional manner.

“We doubt not your brethren will conduct with regard to this and every other matter, with all becoming resolution and integrity; and we have as little doubt, that this will procure the dissolution of the House; and if it should, we hereby authorize you to represent this town in a convention to be formed of the members thereof, or any congress of deputies appointed by the several towns in this Province; therein to deliberate

and devise such measures, as may conduce to relieve us under our present difficulties and embarrassments, and to secure and establish our just rights and privileges on the most solid and permanent foundation."

About this time it was that the affairs of the town were committed to the safeguard of a Committee of Safety,—a name which ought to be ever dear to the freemen of New England. The records of the town for the two ensuing years abound with the doings of this Committee, and with the preparations of arms and ammunition for an obstinate contest. At length in May, 1776 occurs the memorable vote

"That if the honorable Congress should, for the safety of the United Colonies, declare them independent of the kingdom of Great-Britain, this town will, with their lives and fortunes, support them in the measure."

During the continuance of the war, the records bear witness to the exertions of the town to comply with the public requisition in the supply of money, arms, ammunition and soldiers for the defence of the country and the vindication of its liberties. Some of these votes may serve as instructive memorials to us, of the exertions of our fathers to procure the privileges which we enjoy.

"Voted to give twenty pounds bounty for any one who shall enlist in the continental army for three years or during the war."

"Voted to further the raising of one sixth part of the able bodied men in the town, pursuant to a resolve of the General Court, to join the army instantly, and serve till Nov. next; voted, to give each man 7*l.* 10*s.* per month in addition to the state and continental wages; voted to advance 50 dollars to each man enlisting; and voted to remonstrate with the General Court on the hardship of raising a sixth."

"Voted to give nine pounds per month including state and continental wages, and six pounds per month advance, to any who will enlist as a guard to Burgoyne's troops."

"Voted, to raise money to hire seventeen men to serve in the continental army nine months;—also, to raise money to hire thirteen men to serve at Hudson's river eight months."

“Voted, to raise nineteen men to serve at Providence, and eleven as guards at Prospect Hill.”

“Voted to give 100 shillings per month to each man who shall enlist within twenty-four hours, 50 shillings at enlistment; also to provide a wagon to transport the soldiers’ baggage to Tiverton.”

“Voted, to give 300*l.* per month in addition to regular pay, and 450*l.* advance, to each one enlisting to serve for the town three months; that a subscription paper be carried around to raise money; that the town be taxed seventy-five thousand *£.* to be paid before the 1st September next; that the inhabitants be earnestly requested to aid the town upon this emergency by paying their proportion in advance, &c. and all the money so raised go to procure, equip, &c. the town’s proportion of the militia required by the resolve of General Court dated June 8th, 1780.”

A committee was chosen to devise a plan for raising this town’s quota of troops, to serve ‘three years’ or ‘during the war.’ And a committee was chosen to procure enlistments, and ‘pay them such a bounty as they shall think reasonable.’ And as an encouragement to enlist, the town engaged to pay their wages, if ‘the public’ did not, in silver at 6*s* 8*d* per ounce, or in bills of credit equivalent thereto according to the current rate of exchange among merchants. It was voted, also, to raise a thousand pounds silver for that purpose, and afterwards another thousand: and that two thousand pounds silver or gold be hired by the treasurer.

The selectmen were ordered to write to Oliver Phelps, esq. representing that it was impracticable for the town to furnish its quota of beef for the army, and offering to pay a sum of money in lieu thereof. It was voted, that the town be arranged by the assessors ‘into 43 classes, according to property and numbers,’ and that each class ‘procure a man’ upon ‘notice, or be liable to a draft from the commanding officer;’ and that each class advance immediately money enough to hire his quota of men to serve in the continental army according to a resolve of General Court.

Indeed it is only necessary to examine slightly the town records of the New England towns to find ample au-

thority for Mr. Webster's appropriate panegyric on their patriotism.

"My heart beats, I trust, as responsive as any one's to a soldier's claim for honor and renown. It has ever been my opinion, however, that while celebrating the military achievements of our countrymen in the revolutionary contest, we have not always done equal justice to the merits and the sufferings of those who sustained, on their property, or on their means of subsistence, the great burden of the war. Any one, who has had occasion to be acquainted with the records of the New England towns, knows well how to estimate those merits and those sufferings. Nobler records of patriotism exist no where. No where can there be found higher proofs of a spirit, that was ready to hazard all, to pledge all, to sacrifice all, in the cause of the country. Instances were not unfrequent, in which small freeholders parted with their last hoof, and the last measure of corn from their granaries, to supply provision for the troops, and hire service for the ranks. The voice of Otis and of Adams in Faneuil Hall found its full and true echo in the little councils of the interior towns; and if within the continental Congress, patriotism shone more conspicuously, it did not there exist more truly, nor burn more fervently; it did not render the day more anxious or the night more sleepless; it sent up no more ardent prayer to God for succor; and it put forth in no greater degree the fullness of its effort and the energy of its whole soul and spirit in the common cause, than it did in the small assemblies of the towns."—

The following memorial adopted at a meeting in May, 1785, affords further illustration of these remarks.

"To the honorable, &c. of Massachusetts in General Court assembled, the petition of the town of Newburyport humbly shews,

"That in the years 1775 and 1776 the said town, in order to guard and defend themselves and the neighboring towns from the apprehended invasions and attacks of the enemy then infesting the sea-coasts, and making depredations on the maritime towns of the State, pre-

pared and sunk a number of piers in the channel of Merrimac river, near the mouth thereof; they have also built a fort on the Salisbury side of said river and another fort on Plum Island near the entrance of the harbor; they constructed a floating battery, built a barge, and made a number of gun carriages;—the whole expense whereof amounted to the sum of two thousand four hundred and thirty-three pounds, 8 shillings and 2 1-2 pence, as by the accounts, supported by proper vouchers, and ready to be herewith exhibited, will appear.

“That said works were probably the means of preventing the enemy from entering the harbor, and spreading destruction through this part of the State; and at the same time rendered it a safe asylum for vessels belonging to Boston then in the power of the enemy, and for those belonging to Marblehead, Cape Ann, and other exposed maritime towns. And of this opinion, it seems, was the respectable committee sent from the General Court to take a view of our situation and harbor; as well as of the works aforesaid; for upon their report the General Court manifested their approbation of the said works, as prudent, and necessary for the public safety, and made provision for supplying the said fort on Plum Island, with guns, ammunition, and stores, and maintaining a garrison there for a considerable time. The town, being thus favored with the countenance and approbation of the General Court in these proceedings, fully depended that their expenses above mentioned would be seasonably reimbursed. They accordingly exhibited their accounts, which were never objected to, as unreasonable or improper, as your petitioners have understood. Nevertheless, a number of accidents, which, to avoid being tedious, they forbear to particularize, have hitherto prevented their obtaining a settlement, and receiving the satisfactory restitution, which they apprehend themselves justly entitled to. This they consider as a misfortune, especially as the expenses of a like nature incurred by the other towns have long since been discharged by order of the General Court, towards which your petitioners have contributed no small share.

"And as your petitioners are still laboring under a very heavy debt contracted for the general service and defence of the country during the late war, and in addition thereto have been paying interest for the whole sum above mentioned, and are still paying interest for the same, they pray that your honors will be pleased as soon as possible to take the premises into your wise consideration, and order the aforementioned sum to be paid them out of the public treasury, and thus far relieve them under their distresses.

Signed by the selectmen, "by order and in behalf of the town of Newburyport."

Another subject concerning which important facts appear on the records, is the formation of the constitution of Massachusetts. In October, 1776, it was voted that the Council and House in their respective capacities, and not in one body "should enact such a constitution for this State, as they shall think fit for the well-being of the country: and that it previously be made public for the perusal and approbation of the people."

And here may be noted the remarkable singularity in the domestic situation of the country at this time. The State was ruled by a legislative body substantially like that of the Province, which maintained its authority by reliance on the good sense and rectitude of the community, rather than by any coercive power which it was capable of exercising, or which it would have been suffered to exercise, if it had possessed the inclination and capacity. It was entirely dependant upon the towns, every one of which was considered and treated as a distinct republic. At that period, the General Court was rather the congress of these little confederate corporations, than the legislature of an individual commonwealth. When the General Court desired to ascertain the sense of the people, it was usual to propose the subject for discussion in the town meetings. Such was the case, for example, when it was determined to resist England; and continually during the war in raising soldiers and supplies for the continental army.

So it was, also, in respect to the State constitution. A convention, assembled in 1777-8, proposed a sketch of one to the people, which was so much beneath the

wants and pretensions of the country, that many principal men opposed it with great zeal and success. The opposition seems to have been most decided in Newburyport. At a meeting held March 26th, 1778, the following vote occurs :

“ Voted, that this town are of opinion, that the mode of representation contained in the constitution lately proposed by the convention of this State is unequal and unjust, as thereby all the inhabitants of this State are not equally represented, and that some other parts of the same constitution are not founded on the true principles of government ; and that a convention of the several towns of this county, by their delegates, will have a probable tendency to reform the same, agreeably to the natural rights of mankind and the true principles of government.

“ Voted, that the selectmen be desired, in behalf and in the name of the town, to write circular letters to the several towns within the county, proposing a convention of those towns, by their delegates, to be holden at such time and place as the selectmen shall think proper : in said circular letters to propose to each of the towns aforesaid, to send the like number of delegates to said convention, as the same towns have by law right to send representatives to the General Court.”

Accordingly the most eminent citizens of this ancient and leading county assembled at Ipswich and instituted an elaborate examination of the intended constitution, which was printed, with the title of the Essex Result. The effect of this pamphlet, which is attributed to the mighty mind of Theophilus Parsons, then resident in Newburyport, was perfectly decisive of the question. This town unanimously voted to reject the proposed form of government ; and suggested the expediency of calling a new convention for the sole purpose of framing a constitution more worthy of Massachusetts.

This convention it was, which formed our constitution. It has frequently been said that this instrument was the fruit of compromise. Manifest proof of this exists in the records of Newburyport. The vote accepting the constitution, after criticising various parts of the constitution, and proposing amendments, concludes as follows :

"The town then voted that their former delegates, be desired to attend the convention at their adjournment, on the first Wednesday in June next, and use their endeavors to obtain the several alterations and amendments aforesaid, especially the four first mentioned, as far as they may find it prudent. But if this cannot be effected, yet considering that, from variety of opinions generally formed on matters of an interesting nature, by means of prejudices arising from education, and influence of interests, and various other causes, it is not to be expected that a form of government should ever be devised that will be agreeable to all the members of the community, and that consequently mutual concessions must be made; considering further the necessity of a speedy establishment of a form of government for this State, and that provision is made by the one now proposed for a revision of the same at a future period; and esteeming it in general a wise and good one; the town do vote and declare their approbation of the same in its present form."

These extracts on the subject of our revolutionary history cannot be more appropriately concluded than with the address written by Theophilus Parsons and delivered to Gen. Washington in October, 1789, and the answer of the President.

To the President of the United States.

SIR :

"When, by the unanimous suffrages of your countrymen, you were called to preside over their public councils, the citizens of the town of Newburyport participated in the general joy, that arose from anticipating an administration, conducted by the man, to whose wisdom and valor they owed their liberties.

"Pleasing were the reflections, that he, who, by the blessing of heaven, had given them their independence, would again relinquish the felicities of domestic retirement, to teach them its just value.

"They have seen you victorious leave the field, followed by the applauses of a grateful country; and they now see you entwining the olive with the laurel, and in peace, giving security to a people, whom in war you covered with glory.

"At the present moment they indulge themselves in sentiments of joy, resulting from a principle, perhaps less elevated, but exceedingly dear to their hearts;—from a gratification of their affection, in beholding personally among them the friend, the benefactor, and the father of their country.

"They cannot hope, sir, to exhibit any peculiar marks of attachment to your person; for, could they express their feelings of the most ardent and sincere gratitude, they would only repeat the sentiments, which are deeply impressed upon the hearts of all their fellow citizens: but in justice to themselves they beg leave to assure you that, in no part of the United States, are those sentiments of gratitude and affection more cordial and animated, than in the town, which at this time is honored with your presence.

"Long, sir, may you continue the ornament and support of these States; and may the period be late, when you shall be called to receive a reward, adequate to your virtues, which it is not in the power of your country to bestow."

"To the citizens of the town of Newburyport,

"GENTLEMEN .

"The demonstrations of respect and affection, which you are pleased to pay to an individual, whose highest pretension is to rank as your fellow citizen, are of a nature too distinguished, not to claim the warmest return that gratitude can make.

"My endeavors to be useful to my country have been no more than the result of conscious duty:—regards like your's would reward services of the highest estimation and sacrifice. Yet it is due to my feelings that I should tell you those regards are received with esteem, and replied to with sincerity.

"In visiting the town of Newburyport I have obeyed a favorite inclination, and I am much gratified by the indulgence. In expressing a sincere wish for its prosperity, and the happiness of its inhabitants, I do justice to my own sentiments and their merit."

"Signed,

G. WASHINGTON."

The prosperity of Newburyport continued steadily to increase after the constitution of the United States

was established, and the country tranquillized. Its inhabitants firmly supported Washington in his determination to maintain, if possible, a strict neutrality during the wars consequent on the French revolution. Of his famous proclamation of neutrality in 1793, that much disputed but most wise and salutary measure, they expressed the following opinion as a corporation :

“ Voted unanimously, That in the opinion of this town, the neutrality of the United States, during the war now waged by the several belligerent powers in Europe, is consistent with the honor and good faith of our government, and not repugnant to any treaties existing between the United States, and any of those powers.

“ Voted unanimously, That in the opinion of this town, a strict and uniform adherence to that neutrality is of the utmost importance to the best interests and happiness of our country,

“ Voted unanimously, That in the opinion of this town, the late proclamation of the President, declaring that neutrality, was a constitutional and wise measure, resulting from his ardent affection for his fellow-citizens, his knowledge of, and vigilant attention to, their just rights and true interest.

“ Voted unanimously, That in the opinion of this town, any infraction of the laws of neutrality, by any of the citizens of the United States fitting out, or being interested in armed vessels, to cruise against the citizens or subjects of either of the belligerent powers, or personally engaging in such cruise, will naturally tend to injure essentially the agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial interests of this country.”

And in 1794, when the violence of the belligerents, and especially the extravagant maritime pretensions of Great Britain, led them into many aggressions on our neutral rights; and thus induced Congress to provide an embargo for the temporary protection of our commerce, the inhabitants of the town passed a vote approving of the measure, and declaring their opinion that it ought to be continued as long as the public exigencies required it.

In the fall of 1793, a transient gloom was thrown

over the town by the introduction of the small-pox among its inhabitants. Only about twenty persons died of it, owing to the vigilance and precaution used to check its progress. But the consternation occasioned at that time by the presence of this fatal and loathsome malady can hardly be realized now, when vaccination has almost relieved us from the dread of its recurrence. It produced for a short period injurious effects upon the commerce of the town, by deterring persons from resorting to it for the purpose of trade; but the alarm soon subsided, and business resumed its wonted activity.

But the affliction occasioned by the appearance of the yellow fever in the town in the summer of 1796, was more extensive and of longer duration. Even before the discovery of the admirable effects of vaccination, the use of inoculation could disarm the small-pox of a portion of its terrors; and it could be escaped by shunning all intercourse with the infected. But a destructive malignant fever could not be so easily controlled. Thirty-eight persons died of the disease in Newburyport, in a single season; and its ravages were stayed only by the approach of cool autumnal weather. Whether it was imported from abroad, or engendered in the precincts of the town, was then, as it is in like cases now, a matter of dispute and uncertainty. But certain it is that the disease has in almost every instance been quite limited in range; and has commenced its progress in some densely inhabited spot, where local causes rendered the air impure, and susceptible of infection. And it is equally certain that malignant fevers are every year ceasing to be so widely destructive, as the progress of improvement induces the municipal authorities to pay more exact attention to the cleanliness of sea-ports. To its airy situation, the neatness and openness of its streets, and the enforcement of local health laws, far more than to quarantine regulations, Newburyport may probably attribute its long exemption from infectious distempers.

During the differences with the French directory, in which our government was involved in 1798, the inhabitants of Newburyport warmly supported the nation. At a town-meeting holden April 30th 1798, a committee consisting of Benjamin Greenleaf, Charles Jackson,

Theophilus Parsons, Samuel A. Otis, jr. and Jonathan Boardman prepared the following address to President Adams under the direction of the town.

"To the President of the United States."

"Sir :

The inhabitants of the town of Newburyport, fully impressed with the present important crisis of public affairs, are prompted no less by a sense of duty than by their own feelings, to express those sentiments which the occasion so naturally inspires in the breast of every American. From the long experience of your conduct in the many public offices to which you have been called by your own country, they feel the most perfect confidence in your wisdom, integrity and patriotism; and they with cheerfulness declare their entire approbation of your attempt to adjust all existing disputes with the French Republic by an amicable negotiation; of that spirit of conciliation which dictated your instructions to our ministers; and of the principles of justice on which they were founded. They learn with equal indignation and astonishment that this spirit of conciliation has been repelled with contempt, that these principles of justice have been disregarded, and that a heavy tribute, with humiliating concessions on our part, has been proposed to us in a manner arbitrary and unfriendly, as the price at which we must purchase the right of being heard. The inhabitants of this town duly appreciate the blessings of peace and neutrality, but they will never complain at the loss of those blessings, when constrained to sacrifice them to the honor, the dignity and the essential interests of their country. They consider the present interesting state of public affairs as a solemn appeal to the hearts of all independent Americans, and a call on them to come forward with unanimity and firmness, in support of the government and the men of their choice, to resist with becoming dignity any vain attempt to derogate from our common sovereignty, or to degrade our national character from the rank it now justly holds among nations, to convince the world that we are alike uninfluenced by corruption and by fear, and that we will not be a divided people, the

miserable slaves of a foreign power, or the despicable tools of foreign influence.

"Impressed with these sentiments, and relying with full confidence on the wisdom and patriotism of every branch of government, they take this occasion solemnly to pledge their lives and fortunes to support the measures judged necessary by the President and Congress, to preserve and secure the happiness, the dignity, and the essential interests of the United States."

To which the following reply was made by the President:—

To the Inhabitants of Newburyport.

"GENTLEMEN:

The address of the inhabitants of the ancient, populous and wealthy town of Newburyport, passed without a dissentient voice, at a late meeting, as certified by your selectmen, and presented to me by your representative in Congress, Mr. Bartlett, does me great honor.

The astonishment and indignation, you express at the contempt with which a spirit of conciliation has been replied to; your resolution never to complain at the loss of the blessings of peace and neutrality, when constrained to sacrifice them to the honor, dignity and essential interests of your country; to resist with becoming dignity, any vain attempt to derogate from our common sovereignty, or to degrade our national character from the rank it now justly holds among nations; to convince the world that you are alike uninfluenced by corruption and by fear; that you are not a divided people, the miserable slaves of foreign influence, do equal honor to your hearts and judgment.

Your reliance, with full confidence, on the wisdom and patriotism of every branch of the government, and the solemn pledge of your lives and fortunes, to support the measures of the legislature and administration, to preserve and secure the happiness, dignity, and essential interests of the United States, are all the assurances which the best of governments could desire from the best of citizens.

JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, May 8, 1798.

A number of the inhabitants also subscribed about the same time, for the construction and equipment of a ship of twenty guns for the use of the nation, which, in the infancy of our navy, was a service of considerable importance. The following document explains the views of these patriotic citizens.

“NEWBURYPORT, JUNE 1, 1798.

“SIR :

A number of the inhabitants of this town have agreed to build and equip a ship of three hundred and fifty-five tons burthen, to be mounted with 20 six pound cannon, and to offer her to the government of the United States for their use. They have also voted that they will not accept of any farther or other compensation from the government than an interest of six per cent per annum on the net cost of the ship and equipments, and a final reimbursement, at the convenience of government, of the sail net cost; and they have appointed us a committee to inform you of their intentions, and to request you to promote a provision whereby they may be enabled to carry their designs into execution by the countenance of government, so far as the same shall appear necessary. As we indulge a hope that this intention of the citizens of Newburyport will lead to proportionate exertions in larger and wealthier towns, we beg leave to suggest the convenience that any provision, which may be thought proper and applicable to the case, might be general. The inhabitants of this town, at the present moment, are animated with the most zealous resolution to support and defend, with their lives and property, the government of their country, as well against the open attacks of foreign enemies, as the insidious attempts of domestic traitors. They heartily wish their abilities extended beyond their present offer, but the immense ravages which have been committed on their property by sea, and the great proportion of the remnant yet at risk, forbid their farther indulgence of their inclinations. It may be that under a late act of government authorizing the Executive to purchase ships of war, the proposal may be closed without legislative aid. If such should be your opinion, we wish you to lay the plan before the Executive, and we shall be the more

gratified in this way, as the whole business may probably be thus considerably expedited. The materials are already in forwardness, and provisional contracts will be entered into, so that probably, in ninety days from our receiving assurances that government patronizes our design, the ship may be afloat. The best calculations we have been able to make of the whole expense, reduce it below thirty thousand dollars, and if the utmost attention to economy and despatch can effect any thing, the cost will finally fall considerably within that sum.

Among the good effects of the present proposal, we have contemplated that, in this way, government may at this period, when so many calls for money exist, procure the means of defence, without actual advances, perhaps with more promptitude, and undoubtedly with considerably less expense, than in the common mode of contracts. (Signed by)

WILLIAM BARTLETT,
WILLIAM COOMES,
DUDLEY A. TYNG,
MOSES BROWN,
WM. P. JOHNSON,
NICHOLAS JOHNSON,
WILLIAM FARIS,
EBENEZER STOCKER,
SAM. A. OTIS, Jr.

} Committee.

Mon. BAILEY BARTLETT.

This ship was built under the direction of William Hacket as master-builder and superintendant. The work was despatched with so much rapidity that only seventy five working days were consumed in completing her. Her keel was laid July 9th and she was launched into the Merrimac, whose name she bore, October 12th 1798, and was manned and sent to sea with all possible expedition, under the command of capt. Moses Brown. But in consequence chiefly of her being constructed of unseasoned timber she ran only about five years, and was then sold for the merchants' service; soon after which she was wrecked upon cape Cod.

After the short lived war with France was over, and peace restored, the commercial prosperity of Newbury-

port continued to increase with renewed vigor. For the period of ten years next ensuing, its wealth and population were augmented to a degree, of which few examples can be found even in this country, where the growth of towns is often so rapid as to leave little space between their infancy and their maturity. In 1800, the population of the town was 5,946; in 1810 it had become 7,639. In 1802 its whole rateable estate was estimated at only \$3,754,920; but in 1810 it amounted to \$7,069,000 dollars. This period was one of feverish excitement in business and politics. Mercantile industry was stimulated, in a manner the most unprecedented, by the peculiar situation of this country, combined with the local advantages of the town. The happy effects of the neutral policy of Washington were now strikingly manifested; and for several years, whilst every other maritime State was involved in the most embittered warfare, America, a neutral nation at amity with all mankind, was reaping a rich harvest of wealth from the carrying trade of Europe and her colonies. During the lapse of twenty years, indeed, from 1792 to 1812, the full benefit of this trade was enjoyed by the United States alone. Almost every flag but hers was swept from the ocean by the wars engendered by the French revolution. We had, in fact, as a nation, a kind of monopoly of this lucrative occupation.

Newburyport, as already intimated, was well adapted to participate largely in this trade and on a favorable footing. The town was not the seat of any extensive manufacture, which might give it commercial activity, and build it up, as Manchester does Liverpool; nor could it boast of being, like New Orleans or New York, the depot of a vast interior region devoted to agriculture. But having direct access, by means of the river Merrimac, to a country well wooded with ship-timber, its thrifty inhabitants needed but a small capital to enable them to fit out a vessel, and transport the productions of the southern States or of the West Indies to Europe. Their industry was thus liberally rewarded with a speedy increase, in this hardy and enterprising employment.

But these days, so serviceable to the country, were

not destined to be of long duration. The great belligerent powers, engaged in combats injurious to their own commercial prosperity, soon began to regard, with envy and jealousy, the fast rising fortunes of America. They were chagrined to see us taking advantage, honestly enough and most successfully, of their own folly and imprudence. They began by occasional aggressions upon our mercantile marine, desisting from time to time when our remonstrances against their violence became more determined. The sums of money, which they piratically plundered from the nation before 1806, were immense, and the losses, which the merchants of this town thereby sustained, must have seriously affected its prosperity but for the extraordinary extent and profitableness of our trade. But at length the two great warring states of Europe, England and France, with their respective allies, seemed to conspire in their attacks upon our commerce; and our government deemed it necessary, for the protection of our property, to commence that series of restrictive measures, which terminated in the late war with great Britain.

Thus it was that the development of our national energies, and of the prosperity of the town, so wonderfully and so unnaturally hastened before, now underwent a sudden check.

But in addition to the evils arising to us from the cupidity of the European belligerents, and the restrictive and retaliatory measures into which this country was consequently driven, Newburyport was doomed to suffer by a peculiar misfortune. This was the great fire of 1811, which desolated the busiest portion of the town, by its destructive ravages;—and whose effects still meet the eye, in the depopulation of streets formerly filled with dwelling-houses and shops.

This conflagration commenced in a stable in Mechanic Row, near the Market square, and of course in the centre of the portion of the town devoted to trade and business. The stable was at the time unoccupied; and when the fire was discovered, was found to be completely enveloped in flames. This was at half past nine o'clock in the evening of the thirty first day of May, 1811. The fire quickly extended to Market

square on the one hand, and to State street on the other, and soon spread in various directions, with a degree of celerity and fury, which baffled all exertions to stop its progress. The fire continued to rage until about two o'clock in the morning, soon after which its violence diminished; and by sunrise it had in a great measure subsided, after having swept away every thing on a tract of land of sixteen and a half acres, leaving there only a mass of deplorable ruins. No part of the town was more compactly built than this; none contained so large a proportion of valuable buildings, merchandize, and other property. Indeed the compactness of the buildings, which were chiefly constructed of wood, served constantly to feed the flames with combustible material, so that for a time the destruction of the whole town was seriously apprehended. It was estimated that nearly 250 buildings were consumed, most of which were stores and dwelling-houses. This number included nearly all the shops in town for the sale of dry goods; four printing offices; the custom-house; the post-office; two insurance offices; four book-stores; and one meeting house; and the dwellings of more than ninety families.

The scene presented by this conflagration was truly terrible. It is described by an eye-witness in the ensuing words:

"At the commencement of the fire, it was a bright moon light night, and the evening was cool and pleasant. But the moon gradually became obscured and at length disappeared in the thick cloud of smoke, which shrouded the atmosphere.—The glare of light throughout the town was intense, and the heat that of a sultry summer noon. The streets were thronged with those, whose dwellings were consumed, conveying the remains of their property to places of safety. The incessant crash of falling buildings, the roaring of chimneys like distant thunder, the flames ascending in curling volumes from a vast extent of ruins, the air filled with a shower of fire, and the feathered throng fluttering over their wonted retreats, and dropping into the flames; the loosing of the cows, and the confused noise of exertion and distress, united to impress the mind with the most awful sensations."

The unprecedented rapidity, with which the flames spread themselves over the town, may be inferred from the following circumstance. Many persons had, soon after the fire began, carried their goods and furniture seemingly to a secure distance, and deposited them in the meeting-house of the Baptist Society in Liberty-street. But the fire at length reached this place, and consumed the church and its contents, which, being accumulated there, greatly increased the flames.

Nothing was more remarkable during the heart rending scene of this destructive conflagration, than the spectacle which State-street exhibited on one occasion. Two large brick buildings, four stores in height, stood upon the western side of this street, and opposed a barrier to the destructive element, which it was hoped for a time would there be arrested in its course. But a sudden change of wind threw the flames directly upon these immense piles, which were speedily involved in the general calamity. The opposite buildings being now on fire, and the wind blowing with great force, the flames ascended high on either side, and meeting in the air, extended in a continual sheet of fire across the spacious street. The impression made by this tremendous scene upon the mind of the author of these pages, then a youthful spectator of it, will never be effaced from his recollection. It was sublime beyond conception. The beholder could look through a long vista of over-arching blaze, whose extreme brilliancy dazzled and fatigued, while it irresistibly attracted, the straining eye.

The sufferings of the families, whose dwellings and property were consumed, immediately excited the sympathy of the liberal and charitable. Meetings were held in many of the large towns in various parts of the country; and generous donations were received from different quarters, for the relief of the inhabitants. The citizens of Boston collected upwards of twenty-four thousand dollars, which, with characteristic liberality, they presented to the sufferers by the fire. By these means, the losses of the poorer class were very much lightened; and the extent of the calamity was diminished. But the injury to the town, and to very many in-

dividuals, by the absolute destruction of property, was still very serious; and its effects must long continue to be felt.

This misfortune befell the town at a time when the restrictive system had produced a complete stagnation of its commerce, and its inhabitants were deprived of business. Soon afterwards the war ensued; and on the restoration of peace in 1815, the neutral advantages of the nation had ceased to exist. The people of Europe, who had formerly looked with so much jealousy on our prosperous trade, when they were sinking under the exhaustion of protracted warfare, now enjoyed the benefit of peace. Business, of course, was speedily diverted into new channels, and Newburyport has never yet regained its pristine elevation in population and wealth. The consideration of the causes, which produced or accelerated its decline, will form the subject of another portion of these pages; and is only mentioned here as in the course of narrative.

Of the civil history of the town during the last twenty years, and the part taken by its inhabitants in the political affairs of the period, it would not become the author to speak at length. These incidents are too recent to have become, as yet, the subject of history.—The nation was divided, upon the topics discussed in the public acts of the town, at the time in question; and the individuals interested in them still remain upon the stage of life. The peculiar misfortunes of the town occasioned a susceptibility in the breasts of its inhabitants, and an irritation of feeling, in regard to political subjects, which is no longer experienced. The views of public affairs, entertained by the majority of this town and of Massachusetts, were not in unison with the measures, which the executive of the country was compelled, by the injustice of the European belligerents, to pursue.—The voice of the nation, however, approved at that time, and has sanctioned since, the course of our government. The expediency or in expediency of that course would not constitute a suitable matter for discussion in this place. And the addresses, resolutions, and other public acts of the town, during those days of exasperation, could not be introduced.

here without some expression of opinion upon their purport, which would necessarily be invidious and misplaced.

The recent annals of the town furnish no events, for the pen of the historian to record. In the peaceful and tranquil pursuit of the objects of honest industry, its inhabitants are seeking to restore it to its former standing in commerce. Success attend their efforts! "The external situation of the town is unrivalled in beauty; the sides of the river continually increase in populousness; the bar was no obstacle to the acquisition of wealth in former times and therefore need not be now; our mechanics are as faithful and intelligent as they used to be, when they gained so much celebrity for the ship building and naval equipments of the river Merrimac; we can manage distilleries or fisheries with as much skill as our neighbors; we can purchase lumber as cheaply and export it in as good bottoms as can any part of the commonwealth; nor will our merchants or mariners yield to those of any other seaport in uprightness, enterprise, or information. If all these things are true,—and that they are so who can deny?—there is no reason whatever why we should think our future prospects more discouraging than the rest of the maritime towns of equal size in New England."*

* Oration delivered in Newburyport July 4th. 1821.

TOPOGRAPHY.

NEWBURYPORT, as incorporated, was compressed within very narrow limits, lying contiguous to the Merrimac on one side, and being surrounded on the other three sides by the then town of Newbury. The material section of the act of incorporation is in the following words, namely :—

“ Anno Regni Regis Georgii Tertii Quarto.

An Act for erecting part of the town of Newbury into a new town by the name of Newburyport.

Whereas the town of Newbury is very large, and the inhabitants of that part of it who dwell by the water side there, as it is commonly called, are mostly merchants, traders, and artificers, and the inhabitants of the other parts of the town are chiefly husbandmen, by means whereof many difficulties and disputes have arisen in managing their public affairs :

Be it enacted by the Governor, Council, and House of Representatives, that that part of the said town of Newbury and the inhabitants thereof included within the following line, namely, beginning at Merrimac river against the northeasterly end of the town way commonly called Cottle's lane (South-street) and running as the said lane doth on the eastwardly side of it to the highway commonly called the High-street, and so westwardly as the said highway runs on the northwardly side thereof, till it comes to a highway known by the name of Fish-street, (State-street) and thence southwestwardly as the way goes and on the eastwardly side thereof leading by Benjamin Moody's, to a place called the West Indies, until it intersects a straight line drawn from the southwardly side of the highway against Cottle's lane as aforesaid to a rock in the great pasture

near the dividing line between the third and fifth parishes there, and so as the said straight line goes until it comes to the dividing line aforesaid, from thence as the said dividing line runs by the said fifth parish down to Merrimac river, and thence along said river to the place first mentioned,—be and hereby are constituted and made a separate and distinct town by the name of Newburyport, vested and endowed with all the powers, privileges, and immunities, that the inhabitants of any of the towns within this Province do or ought by law to enjoy.”

The space comprehended within these limits contains but 647 acres, and constitutes the smallest town in the commonwealth. Add to this that a considerable portion of the territory lies in common, or is unoccupied by houses, and the denseness of the population in the occupied portion of it, will be still more manifest.

This tract of land was first laid out in 1644, five years after the incorporation of Newbury. In 1642 the town of Newbury ‘well weighing the straights they were in for want of plough ground, remoteness of the common, and scarcity of fencing stuff,’ granted authority to Thomas Parker, James Noyes, John Woodbridge, Edward Rawson, John Cutting, Edward Woodman, John *Lowle* (Lowell) and John Clark, to lay out a ‘new town,’ which was accordingly done January 11th 1644. This ‘new town’ included all the inhabited part of Newburyport, extending south westerly to a line running nearly parallel with the river ‘through the pine-swamp.’

A considerable tract of land within the limits of this town, namely, the water lots, was then and long continued to be in common and undivided. In 1707 the proprietors voted to divide these water lots, and the committee appointed for the purpose completed their task in 1714. They were divided into 225 lots, ‘by the same rule as the 6000 acres in the upper woods were laid out,’ assigning to each commoner his rateable proportion, and leaving suitable public landing places.—Since that time, and mostly subsequent to the incorporation of Newburyport, fifteen large wharves, and a number of small ones have been constructed upon these water-lots.

The location of the town presented facilities for laying out the streets with regularity, which have not been disregarded. The populous part of the town forms a parallelogram covering the declivity beside the Merrimac, of which the long sides are Water-street next the river, and High-street on the summit of the ridge. The other main streets unite these nearly at right angles, and are generally wide, and constructed with great neatness and convenience. And these again are intersected by other small streets of similar construction.

The principal public buildings in Newburyport are, a brick court-house, one half of which is the property of the county, and the other half of the town; a stone gaol, erected in 1825; a brick market-house, built in 1823; a town-hall; four brick school-houses and seven churches. Of the churches and schools a more particular account will be given in the sequel.

Of the public improvements connected with the town the most expensive is the Newburyport Turnpike.—This was begun in 1803 and completed in 1806.—It proceeds in a straight line from the head of State-street in Newburyport to Malden bridge, and makes the distance only thirty-two miles to Boston, more than five miles less than the main post road. Immense labor was employed in the construction of this road, in filling up deep vallies, and digging away hills, so as to preserve the direct course to Boston. In the first twenty miles all the angles together increase the distance only *eighty-three* feet:—so successful were the projectors in the accomplishment of their purpose. The whole cost of this turnpike was 420,000 dollars, and the original proprietors have received a very scanty income from their investments in the stock.—Taste and the exigencies of business carry most travellers through Ipswich and Salem, and away from the turnpike, which would probably have been more valuable and useful, had it been so directed as to take those towns in its course. But although less useful than it might be if it ran otherwise, it is a monument of the enterprise and perseverance of its projectors.

The local advantages of Newburyport as a place of business are derived from its contiguity to the Merrimac. This name, handed down from the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, signifies a *sturgeon*. The river is formed by the junction of the Pemigewasset and Winipisiogee, in New Hampshire. The Winipisiogee flows from the lake of that name, and unites with the Pemigewasset at Sanbornton, after which the confluent stream bears the name of Merrimac. The Pemigewasset arises in the White Mountains, and in its long descent among the highlands receives accessions from many tributary rivulets. From its source the Pemigewasset flows south about fifty miles to the junction; and from thence the Merrimac runs about ninety miles, first in a southerly and afterwards in an easterly direction to the sea.

In its course the Merrimac passes over many falls. Of these the most remarkable, either for beauty or height, are the Hookset, the Amoskeag, and the Patucket.—Around each of these, navigable canals have been constructed. The canal at Patucket fall is the site of the great manufacturing establishments, which have given such sudden rise to the eastern part of Chelmsford, now the town of Lowell. Between this place and Haverhill, the head of the navigation of the river, there are several other falls and rapids. A number of citizens of Newburyport and others, several years ago, obtained permission from the legislature to construct a canal around these remaining obstructions in the Merrimac, for the purpose of enabling heavy goods to be conveyed by water the whole extent of the river from the sea, and thus increasing the commerce of Newburyport; but they have never yet been able to procure funds for the contemplated enterprise. As it is, the trade of the interior, which should naturally be conducted by the river to Newburyport, is diverted from thence to Boston by Middlesex canal.

Several bridges have been thrown across this river at different places. Of these the Essex Merrimac Bridge, between Newbury and Salisbury, about three miles above Newburyport, first erected in 1792, is the

most deserving of notice. It consists in fact of two bridges, resting upon an island in the midst of the river. The bridge on the Newbury side is hung upon chains; and the bank of the river and of the island at this point being high and precipitous, the plan of the bridge is a very happy effort to overcome the natural difficulties of the location. The engineer under whose direction it was built was Mr. Timothy Palmer, a citizen of Newburyport, who died there in 1821, to whose taste and enterprise much of the regularity and beauty of its streets are to be attributed.

The direct course from Boston to Portsmouth and Portland lies through Newburyport. But in consequence of the Essex Merrimac bridge being upwards of two miles above Newburyport on the river, the traveler on the great eastern post road is obliged to deflect to the westward at Newburyport, and pass up the river to cross the bridge. To remedy this inconvenience, a new bridge is now constructing near the ferry over the Merrimac from Newburyport to Salisbury, which will considerably diminish the distance to Portsmouth.

The mean breadth of the Merrimac at Newburyport, may be estimated at about eighty rods. The harbor is capacious, safe, and commodious, but difficult of entrance, the mouth of the river being obstructed by a bar. This bar consists of loose shifting sand, and the channel over it is narrow and terminated on each side by dangerous shoals. The *greatest* depth of water upon it, at high tides, is about fourteen feet. It is probably formed by the current of the river, in its progress out, meeting the drift of the sea and opposing winds, and by that means forming a bank of loose sand, which the strength of the tide is insufficient to force out.*—It extends across before the mouth of the river from Salisbury beach to Plum island. This island is about eight miles long, and not more than five hundred paces in width, stretching along the shore, from which it is separated by a narrow river, which empties itself into Ipswich bay. It consists of yellow sand, thrown up by the wind into fantastic hillocks, and bearing scarcely

* Blunt's Coast Pilot, page 159.

any vegetation except thickets of juniper and the plum,* from which it derives its name; a very small part of it being capable of cultivation. Two light-houses stand upon the northerly end of the island, containing fixed lights, but the light houses themselves being so constructed as to be moveable, on account of the constant shifting of the bar and of the channel of the river.

As the dangerous character of this island not unfrequently subjected seamen to much suffering upon the coast, and sometimes to shipwreck, permanent provision has repeatedly been made for their succor and relief.—Many years ago the Marine Society erected huts to protect them from the storms; which, however, owing to the cooperation of various causes, were before long totally destroyed. Since then the Merrimac Humane Society took precautions for a time, to maintain shelter constantly on the shore for the distressed mariner. Partly to aid in the same benevolent object, a bridge and turnpike have been constructed from Newburyport to Plum Island; in order that immediate relief may be afforded to such persons as unfortunately chance to be cast upon the island by tempestuous weather.

The great inconvenience sustained by the public in general, and by Newburyport especially, in consequence of the obstructions at the mouth of the Merrimac, has directed much speculation to the question whether they may be removed.—A chimerical idea has been entertained by some, of deepening the sea on the bar by a kind of plough to be propelled by a steam-boat. But as well might it be attempted to plough a permanent furrow in the sea itself; for the bar consisting of quicksands, if it could be removed in the method above mentioned, it would be of no avail; because the sand would be instantly washed in, by the action of the wind and waves, and fill up the channel anew.

* *Prunus littoralis* of Big. Some other plants of interesting botanical character, are to be found on Plum island, such are the *Hudsonia tomentosa*, whose yellow flowers, and tufted downy appearance, give a peculiar aspect to the sandy waste;—the *Convallaria stellata*, found in great perfection;—the *Lathyrus maritimus* of Big., with large showy, purple flowers, and bright green leaves;—and especially the *Arenariat perfoliata*, whose fleshy glaucous stems are clustered into green little tufts, which, rising as they do from the naked sands, resemble oases in the desert.

An application was made to Congress the last session for an appropriation for the purpose of surveying the harbor and mouth of the river, and ascertaining whether any improvements of the navigation are practicable. A sum of money was accordingly granted; and the question will probably now be definitively settled by a practised engineer.—Much confidence is reposed by many in the good effect of narrowing and straightening the channel of the river by a breakwater, so as to carry the whole body of its waters, concentrated in a smaller compass and with greater intensity than it now flows, against the bar; which, it is thought, may be driven further out to sea, and thus the water be deepened.

The course of the river at its entrance into the sea is continually changing.—In the lapse of a few years the sand shifts the breadth of the channel. The land is now adding on the Salisbury shore, and yielding place to the water at the adjacent extremity of Plum Island. The site of a fort formerly built on this island for the protection of the harbor is now on the Salisbury side. A tradition exists that, at the first settlement of the country, the present channel might have been forded over; and that the main passage of the river into the sea was then at Ipswich bar.

The chief natural curiosity near Newburyport is a series of limestone pits, about two miles south of the town, known by the name of the Devil's Den. These were formerly wrought to advantage, but have long since been abandoned. The excavations are still regarded with interest, on account of a number of minerals to be found there, some of which are of rare occurrence. The limestone rock is intersected with strata of serpentine, of various shades, from the light green to the darkest variety, of a fine grain, and susceptible of the most beautiful polish. The serpentine again is frequently traversed by thin veins of asbestos of a short but very delicate and glossy fibre. Tremolite, also, is found there in abundance; with iron pyrites, sometimes of a large size; and occasionally garnets; and other more common minerals.—The excavations, being superficial, are not otherwise particularly remarkable.

BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATIONS.

The charitable associations in Newburyport are numerous; and of necessity only a portion of them can be described in the limits of these pages. The following are among the most important and most notorious.

THE MARINE SOCIETY

Of Newburyport was incorporated in 1777. The idea of the association was borrowed from a similar society in Boston, chartered by Gov. Shirley in 1754, and another in Salem, both for the same general purposes. In November 1772 the following persons, namely, Thomas Jones, William Wyer, Benjamin Rogers, Samuel Newhall, Michael Hodge, and Edward Wigglesworth, instituted the society at Newburyport, each person contributing a guinea to commence a charitable fund for unfortunate members, and inviting others to join on the same condition. They were incorporated in 1777, and have continued in being ever since, always maintaining a high character for respectability, and for liberal charities.

The principal ends of the Society, which is composed entirely of past or present ship masters, are two:—To improve the knowledge of the coast by the several members, upon their arrival from sea, communicating their observations inwards and outwards of the variation of the needle, soundings, courses, distances, and other remarkable things, in writing, to be lodged with the Society, for the greater security of navigation;—And to raise a common fund, for the relief of the members and their families in poverty, or other adverse accidents of life, to which mariners are particularly subject.

For the support and protection of any shipmasters

who have met with accidents at sea, such as shipwreck, capture, or the like, it is customary for the Society, if the party desire it, to examine into the circumstances of the case, and if his conduct should appear to them satisfactory, to give him a certificate of their approbation.

Conscious of the difficulties attending an approach to the port, occasioned by the bar, the Society early took measures for facilitating the navigation of the river.—In 1783 they erected two beacons on Plum island to serve as landmarks for the guidance of vessels during the day; and made provision for the support of lights in the night; which they maintained, assisted by the merchants, until light-houses were afterwards erected at the expense of the government. At the same time they established a system of signals, by which to make known the quality of any vessel, which might appear standing towards the mouth of the river.

In 1787 the Society first caused two small houses to be erected on Plum island, to receive shipwrecked mariners, and shelter them from the inclemencies of the weather until they could have further aid,—as already mentioned in another part of this work.—The Society, even then, found it difficult to keep the huts from being destroyed by malicious or mischievous persons.

The Society have occasionally ordered surveys to be made, to ascertain the situation of ledges or other hindrances to navigation.

In 1800 its funds amounted to \$5565; in 1820 to \$11-522;—notwithstanding its many liberal donations to indigent members or their families.

THE MERRIMAC HUMANE SOCIETY

Was instituted in 1802. The first meeting was holden August 10th of that year, at which byelaws were adopted; and the Society was organized by the choice of its officers the following month. It was continued by voluntary association until 1804, when an act of incorporation was obtained, authorizing the Society to hold property of the annual amount of one thousand dollars. The end and design of the association are declared in the act to be 'for the recovery of persons, who meet with

such accidents as produce in them the appearance of death, and for promoting the cause of humanity, by pursuing such means, from time to time, as shall have for their object the preservation of human life and the alleviation of its miseries.'

These humane and charitable purposes have been promoted by the Society in various ways. The vicinity of the river, and of a dangerous shore upon the sea-coast, have afforded it frequent occasion to be of use in accidents occasioned by water. The society procured a life-boat; grappling irons to take up the bodies of any person who should be drowned; and fumigators, inflators, and an electrical machine, to be used in restoring suspended animation. These are deposited in convenient places to be accessible as occasion requires. This Society imitated the Marine Society by erecting huts upon Plum island and on Salisbury beach for the resort of distressed mariners; and deposited in them necessaries for their immediate relief. But malicious persons, or others in idle sport, continued wantonly to injure and deface the huts, and thus defeated the benevolent views of the Society, so that in 1825 only one of them was standing, and the Society determined not to erect any more. The Society have also made it an object to take honorable notice of any signal effort made use of by individuals to rescue persons from drowning, by the bestowment of medals, or small pecuniary rewards, as a testimony of applause.

The funds of the Society were obtained by subscription, and by collections made at the annual meetings.—In 1816 the Society subscribed two thousand dollars of its funds for the use of the Massachusetts Hospital for the Insane.

It has been customary for the Society, until within a few years, to attend the delivery of an anniversary discourse. The persons, who have officiated on these occasions, are Dr Bass, Rev. Joseph Dana, Daniel A. White, Rev. Samuel Cary, Rev. Samuel Spring, Michael Hodge jun. Dr Enoch Toppan, Ebenezer Mosely, Samuel L. Knapp, Rev. John Andrews, Rev. Daniel Dana, Rev. James Morss, William B. Banister, Leverett Saltonstall, and Rev. George Otis. The last address was in 1819.

THE FEMALE CHARITABLE SOCIETY,

Was instituted June 8th, 1803. Its object is to make regular provision for the maintenance of female orphans; for their instruction in the principles of knowledge, virtue, and religion; and for their being employed in such manner as may prepare them for future usefulness.—The associates, consisting entirely of ladies, were incorporated by act of March 15th, 1805. From an account published by the Society in 1822 it appears that the original number of subscribers was 127, who laid the foundations of a fund, which at that time amounted to \$1510. This was obtained by donations, subscriptions, and collections at the anniversary meetings of the Society. The Society had received into its asylum, previous to 1822, *forty* orphan females, whose, character and deportment after leaving the institution have been very honorable to its managers. The children now under the care of the Society are thirteen in number.*

THE MERRIMAC BIBLE SOCIETY

Was instituted by voluntary association, December 20th 1809, and incorporated by the legislature the ensuing February. Their object is to raise a fund to be appropriated in procuring bibles of the common version, for distribution among those persons, in this commonwealth or elsewhere, who are destitute of the scriptures and cannot easily be supplied without such aid; and to distribute the bible in other languages when deemed expedient. This Society have diligently performed the duties which they undertook, in proportion to the extent of their means, by distributing copies of the bible within the sphere of their knowledge and influence.

In 1817 the society voted unanimously to become auxiliary to the American Bible Society. It is customary for the society to have an annual meeting, at which a discourse is delivered, and reports made of the progress and condition of the institution.

* For a full account of the nature and objects of the Society, see the tract above mentioned and Rev. S. P. Williams' Sermon, May 21, 1822.

THE HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Was formed February 13th, 1816. The present number of annual subscribers is 228, besides 26 life subscribers. The object of the Society is to afford relief to the indigent in sickness or other distressed circumstances.

THE INSTITUTION FOR SAVINGS

Is a society of the most useful and laudable character, being established solely for the encouragement of thrift, industry, and economy among the laboring classes. Its design is to assist those, who are desirous of saving their money, but have not acquired sufficient to purchase bank stock or other public stocks, and who have not the knowledge or means requisite to enable them to employ their savings to advantage themselves, without the risk of loss. The trustees receive deposits as low in amount as one dollar, and pay an interest of five per cent to the depositors. The trustees receive no pay or emolument themselves; but every five years the surplus income of the funds, if any, after deducting necessary expenses, is also to be divided. Depositors may either receive their dividends semiannually, or suffer them to remain with the trustees and accumulate. This institution was incorporated in 1820.

THE MARINE BIBLE SOCIETY

Was instituted in 1822. Its object is the distribution of the scriptures among seamen alone. A plan is now on foot for uniting this association with the Merrimac Bible Society, which will probably be successful.

There are other benevolent associations, which, being auxiliary to larger bodies abroad, it is unnecessary to enumerate. And in addition to those already mentioned, a class of associations exists, whose useful but unobtrusive charity is entitled to the greatest respect.—They are the several parish-societies, consisting of females, who assiduously watch over the welfare of the industrious poor in their respective congregations, and aid them in sickness and want.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

There are seven religious societies in Newburyport, namely, three of the congregational, two of the presbyterian, one of the episcopalian, and one of the baptist denomination: of each of which a separate account will be given in the order of time in which they were incorporated.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Is the oldest religious society in Newburyport. The founders of it experienced some opposition from over-zealous persons of the congregational form of worship in the neighborhood; but at length, in 1711, they erected a building, called, in honor of the reigning princess, Queen Anne's Chapel. It stood on what is called *the Plains* in Newbury, on a spot now used as a burying ground, about three miles from the present church.

The members of the society immediately sent to England for a pastor; and the Rev. Mr. Lampton was appointed to officiate in their church, as a missionary, by the English Society for Propagating the Gospel. Mr. Lampton came here in 1711 and remained until 1714.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Henry Lucas, a missionary from the same Society, who arrived in 1715. He continued to officiate until 1720, when he died. He is reputed to have been a very active and faithful preacher; and highly useful to the cause of his church.

His parishioners remained without any regular clergyman until 1722, when the Rev. Matthias Plant arrived as missionary to Newbury, and minister of the episcopal church. It increased very considerably un-

der his ministrations ; so that difficulties at length arose between his and the neighboring parishes on account of taxes ; which the latter claimed of the episcopalians within their limits. Mr. Plant applied to governor Shute for relief ; and he promptly gave them a grant of immunity from taxation by the other parishes. This instrument is in the following words :—

“ Boston, 27th July, 1722. Whereas upon information from the Rev. Matthias Plant, minister of the church of England, Newbury, that several persons of that and the adjoining towns have professed themselves members of the said church, and accordingly have entered their names in their register-book ; and that the Rt. Rev. the Bp. of London hath settled a minister amongst them, and that there is a very considerable congregation ; I do therefore order, that the persons, who have already declared, or shall hereafter declare, for the said established church, be peaceably allowed in their proceedings, and must not be taxed or imposed upon for the support and maintenance of any other public worship in the said town or towns, wherein they shall inhabit : Of which all persons concerned are to take notice accordingly.

“ Given under my hand, Samuel Shute.

“ To his majesty’s justices of the peace for
the county of Essex, or any one of them. } ”

“ Attested, that this is the true form of the original, signed and granted by his excellency S. Shute, governor of New England, for the protection of the members of the church of England, in Newbury, and for such persons as shall enter their names into the register-book.

Matthias Plant.”

In 1738 a new church was commenced on the spot occupied by the present building, and completed in 1742, which received the name of St. Paul’s Church. Mr. Plant was invited to preach there ; which he did at first every other Sunday. But soon afterwards the members of St. Paul’s Church and he had a misunderstanding, in consequence of their desiring a younger minister ;—and Mr. Plant ceased to officiate there for three years.—At length, however, their differences were accommodated, and Mr. Plant was inducted into the church in 1751.—He agreed to accept as an associate of Mr. Edward Bass,

and to surrender to him a portion of the salary which he received from England.

Mr. Bass immediately went to London and was ordained by Dr. Sherlock, then bishop of London. He returned in 1752 and commenced his pastoral labors as minister of St. Paul's.

In 1753 Mr. Plant died, in the 62d year of his age; after which Mr. Bass took charge of both parishes, continuing to officiate twice in each month, for some time, in the Chapel. But in 1766, the Chapel having become much decayed, and most of the worshippers residing nearer to the other church, it was agreed that all should assemble at St. Paul's.

Mr. Bass officiated as rector of this church fifty one years. He was born at Dorchester in this State, November 23d 1726, and graduated at Harvard College in 1744. From this period until he received his master's degree he was engaged in the instruction of a school.—From 1747 until 1751 he resided at the College, attending to the study of theology, and occasionally supplying vacant pulpits in the congregational churches. He was ordained in 1752, and entered upon the charge of St. Paul's Church the same year, as already stated. In 1789 the university of Pennsylvania conferred on him the degree of doctor in divinity. In 1796 he was unanimously elected, at a convention of the protestant episcopal church of Massachusetts, to be their bishop; and was consecrated in Christ-Church May 7th 1797, by the bishops of Pennsylvania, New York, and Maryland. He was afterwards elected bishop of the episcopal churches in Rhode Island and New Hampshire. He died in this town September 10th 1803, in the 76th year of his age. He lived universally esteemed as 'a sound divine, a critical scholar, an accomplished gentleman, and an exemplary christian.'—He was remarkable in private life for his urbanity and serenity of temper, and his discharge of all the duties incumbent on him in his several social relations; and as a clergyman and diocesan was eminent for his faithful attention to all his official functions, by which he gained the affection of his people, and the veneration of the community.

His society suffered from various and opposite causes

during the revolution; but when peace was restored, it recovered from its embarrassments. A new church was erected in 1800, upon the site of the old one, in which the society now worship. During the time occupied in its erection, from April to October, they assembled in the church belonging to the second Presbyterian Society. In token of gratitude for this favor, the episcopal church presented to that society a handsome piece of plate.

Bishop Bass, was succeeded by the present incumbent, the Rev. James Morss, who became rector of the church in November 1803. Priest's order were conferred on him in June 1804, by bishop Moore of New York.*

THE FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

In Newburyport was formed in 1725, out of the First Parish in Newbury. The following is a copy of the act of incorporation as found in the records of the Society.

"At a Greate and Genaral Court or Assembly of his Majesties Prouince, of the Massachusetts Bay New-England, Held Nouember 3, 1726, Samuel Thaxter, Esq. from the Comity, of both Houses on the Petition of several Inhabitants of Newbury first Parish, Gaue in the following Report, viz. :

"Pursuant to an order of the Genaral Court at thair Session in Nouember 1725, in answer to the Petition of the westerly part of the old Parish in Newbury ordering us the subscriburs to view the scituation of the Petitioners as well as the other part of the first Parish in Newbury, Espesially where the middle diuiding Line is Proposed and to hear the parties therein, Conferred and make Report thereon :

In obedience to the said order upon the first day of December Curnt we Repaired to Newbury and hauing Notified the Persons Concernd, we Vewd the seuarall parts of the old Presinct and the Land of the new proposed Parish and Report as follows, That the Lane call-

* This account is derived from a printed Sermon delivered by Rev. Mr. Morss in St. Paul's Church, Jan. 6th, 1811.

ed Chandlers Lane shall be the diuiding Line between the old and new Parishes, and to continue as the old or first Parish has already granted on the nineteenth of June 1722. But in as much as eight families that live near the said line and on the south side thereof, viz. Edward Sargant, Jams Crocker, Isaac Hall, Joseph Swazey, Stephen Presson, William Allen, John Greenlife, jun. and Isaac Miricke have desired to be set to the New Parish, and som of them have been at charge in building the New Meeting House, the Comity are humbly of opinion that the said eight families with their estats adjoyning shall be set to the new Parish during the Courts pleasure. Also where as there is a considerable number of families on the Northerly Side of the New Meeting House, that have entred their decents against being joined to the New Parish, the Comity are of opinion that thay be joined to the New Parish, Provided the said Parish do accomodate them with sutabel Pews, or Seats for thair reception, without thair being at any Charge therefor. December 8, 1725: William Rogers, Daniel Epes, Samuel Thaxter, Thomas Choat, Spencer Phips.

“In Counsel read and ordered that this Report be accepted, and that the Land within the Bounds in the said Report Discribed, be sett of a distinct and seprate Precinct, and that the Inhabitance thereof be vested with the powers and Priuileges that the Inhabitants of other Precincts are Vested with :

“In the House of Representatives Read and Concurd. Consented to: William Dummer.”

The Society were organized pursuant to this act in the winter of 1725-6, and made choice of Rev. John Lowell, (originally spelt Lowle,) for their pastor.— He was ordained January 19th, 1726. The parish vote fixing his salary was in the following words :

“Voted that whereas we have made choice of and called the Rev. Mr. John Lowell to settle with us in the work of the ministry, for his encouragement to undertake and ingage there in, we will pay him one hundred and thirty pounds per year in bills of credit or such other current passable money as shall be equivalent to one hundred and thirty pounds of silver at six-

teen shillings per ounce, in case he shall settle with us in the ministry, and that we will add twenty pounds to his salary after two years from the date hereof, of like money, to be paid annually, so long as he the said Mr. John Lowell shall continue in the work of the ministry among us."

"Voted, also, that we will provide a parsonage house, or give him two hundred pounds, in bills of credit, to enable him to provide a house for himself, on condition of his settling and continuing with us as above said, to be at his charge."

In May 1727, it was voted to purchase a bell weighing four hundred pounds.—And in the same year it appears that the practice of ringing a bell at nine o'clock in the evening was commenced.

In the parish records of this Society, votes are continually occurring in respect to the schools, which were under the direction of the precinct. Some curious notices are to be met with concerning their first establishment in what afterwards became Newburyport.—Thus it was voted in 1730 that

"Those scholars that do go to school to the school-master shall pay a groat a week; and what that shall want to pay the school-master, the parish will make up, with what is raised in general."

And at the same time it was voted that

"The place where the school house shall stand shall be by Frog Pond, near two thirds of the way between Fish street and Queen street."

In 1730, it was also voted, that

"The school master shall have sixty pounds a year, with what is raised in the town in the general; and that no children be sent to the school-master but what can read well in a psalter."

In April 1733, occurs the following record of the mode of paying the taxes:

"Voted, that the contribution shall be continued for this present year, and every man to write on the money he shall give in contribution, and all the money he shall give to be deducted out of his rate.

"Voted, that what money is given in to the contribu-

tion box, that is not written upon, is given to Mr. John Lowell for this present year."

Mr. Lowell died in 1767, deeply lamented by his parishioners, whose affection and respect he had secured by faithful devotion to their service for forty-two years. He was generous and hospitable in disposition, peculiarly amiable in all the social and domestic relations, and distinguished as a sound scholar and exemplary divine. The tolerant and catholic spirit which he displayed on doctrinal points gave him the reputation of inclining a little more to *liberality* of tenets than was usual among the clergy of his time, who still retained much of the rigid faith of their ancestors.* His family were of Welch extraction originally, and fixed themselves at Newbury soon after its settlement. From thence the branch of it, to which he belonged, removed to Boston, where he was born. His only child was John Lowell, afterwards eminent as a lawyer, statesman, and judge.

In January, 1768, the church and parish voted to invite the Rev. Thomas Cary to become their minister. It was voted to give Mr. Cary

"One hundred pounds a year, as salary, and also the free contribution and use of the parsonage land," and that in case he accepted the call, he should be furnished with a suitable parsonage house.

In July, 1788, Mr. Cary became disabled from regularly discharging his pastoral duties by a paralytic affection. In consequence of this an arrangement was amicably made between him and the parish to their mutual satisfaction, by which, although his ministerial relation to them continued, yet they were released from the payment of any salary, and he from the performance of parochial duties, except so far as the same should be voluntary.

Soon afterwards the Rev. John Andrews was invited to settle as a colleague with Mr. Cary; with a settlement salary of one hundred and fifty-six pounds. He accepted the invitation and was ordained December 10th. 1788.

* Mr. Tucker's Funeral Sermon.

It is mentioned in the newspaper of the day, that November 6th. 1796, the church organ, built by Dr Josiah Leavitt of Boston, was put up in the meeting-house of this Society.

The meeting-house in which the Society worshipped, situated near the centre of what is now Market square, was abandoned, in 1801, and the new one erected in Pleasant-street. The old one had long been very much decayed. In 1784 the Proprietors voted 'To give the house as frugal a repair as will keep the weather from totally destroying it.' The Society continued to assemble in the old house, however, until September 26th. 1801, when discourses were delivered there for the last time by Mr. Andrews, in the morning, and by Mr. Cary, in the afternoon. The new church was dedicated the ensuing Thursday.

Mr. Cary died November 24th 1808. He was born in Charlestown in this State, October 18th. 1715, and graduated at Harvard College in 1761. He was highly esteemed for his sound devotion, his judicious and instructive pulpit discourses, and his faithful discharge of all his ministerial functions; which were unhappily interrupted by disease at the prime of his life and mental faculties.

Since the decease of Mr. Cary his colleague has continued to be pastor of the Society. He is the only clergyman in Newburyport of the Unitarian persuasion; in which class of christians his Society are ranked.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SOCIETY

Dates its origin to the year 1744. It consisted of persons who separated, about that time, from the first and third churches in Newbury, that is, Mr. Toppan's and Mr. Lowell's. They erected a house of worship in High street, in which they remained until 1756; when the present church in Federal street was built.

The formation of the church took place in consequence of the preaching of Mr. Whitfield, who produced so deep and extensive an ardor on the subject of religion during his residence in New-England. What ever may be thought of the peculiar opinions of Mr.

Whitfield, certain it is that his eloquence as a preacher was unrivalled; and his zeal for the cause he taught of the highest character. The fruits of his ministration here were great and striking; and the establishment of the Society under consideration afforded proof of the permanency of its effects.*

This Society first worshipped under Mr. Joseph Adams; but in 1756 they were incorporated and settled the Rev. Jonathn. Parsons, who continued their pastor until his death in 1776. He was born in West Springfield and graduated at Yale college in 1749. In 1750 he took charge of a church in Lyme; but his sentiments being changed by the preaching of Tennent and Whitfield, he was invited, on the recommendation of the latter, to remove to Newbury. He was a faithful pastor, a scholar of various learning, and a correct and easy writer, as his printed writings attest.

In 1748 the church began to be associated with others in Presbytery; and regularly commissioners attended it; but it did not formally adopt the constitution of the Presbyterian church in the United States until 1802.

In 1772 Mr. Parsons became disabled by illness; and application was made to the Rev. John Murray of Boothbay to become his colleague. This call was repeatedly renewed; but owing to various causes was not successful until 1781.

Mr. Murray continued pastor of the Society until his death in 1793. He was born in 1742 in the county of Antrim in Ireland;—and was educated in the university of Edinburgh. He came to America in 1761, and was settled in Philadelphia, and afterwards at Boothbay for thirteen years. He was a popular and zealous preacher; dignified in his manners; and exceedingly endeared to his people as a clergyman and a man. He had been deposed by the Philadelphia Presbytery, but was afterwards restored by another Presbytery, for the gross informality, if not injustice, of the original sentence.

He was succeeded by Rev. Daniel Dana, who was ordained in 1794, and continued in the pastoral charge of

* His remains are interred under the church of this Society.

the Society until 1820, when he became president of Dartmouth college.

Dr Dana was succeeded by the present pastor, the Rev. Samuel P. Williams, who was installed February 8th 1821.

In 1794 a part of this Society seceded on account of the settlement of Dr Dana, and formed the Second Presbyterian Society. But it is remarkable that the latter has now called 'him whom their fathers refused', and that through them he is restored to the scenes of his early usefulness.

In the year 1791 a part of the Society separated and formed the Fourth Religious Society, and settled the Rev. Charles W. Milton, as hereafter stated. In 1798 the differences between them and the parent congregation were amicably adjusted.*

* Historical account of the First Presbyterian Church, by Rev. Samuel P. Williams.

The following is the original agreement for the establishment of this church as given in Mr. Williams' discourse.

"We, the subscribing brethren, who were members of the first church in Newbury, and have thought it our duty to withdraw therefrom, do also look upon it our duty to enter into a church estate, specially as we apprehend this may be for the glory of God and the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom, as well as for our own mutual edification and comfort.

We do, therefore, as we trust, in the fear of God, mutually covenant and agree to walk together as a church of Christ according to the rules and order of the gospel.

In testimony whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seals, this 3d day of Jan. A. D. 1746.

Charles Pierce
Moses Bradstreet
Edward Presbury
John Brown
Richard Hall
Benjamin Knight
William Brown
Jonathau Plumer
Silvanus Plumer
Cutting Pettingell.

Benjamin Pierce
Daniel Noyes
Mager Goodwin
Thomas Pike
Daniel Wells
Joseph Hidden
Nathaniel Atkinson, jr.
Daniel Goodwin
Samuel Hall

THE THIRD RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

Is distinguished, in the early records, by the name of the proprietors and other persons attending public worship at the north meeting house in Newburyport, and subsequently as the north congregational Society. They separated from the First Religious Society by amicable agreement in 1767; and the church of the latter, in token of harmony of feeling, voluntarily consented that the new church should have a portion of the church plate according to their respective numbers.

They immediately erected a meet-house in Titcomb-street, and at their first meeting, holden October 3d 1768, invited the Rev. Christopher B. Marsh to be their minister. He was ordained in the same month, and continued to be pastor of the Society until December 1773. He was the son of Daniel Marsh of Boston, and sustained a high character, as a scholar and a clergyman. But unhappily he died prematurely, in the prime of his life and usefulness, at the age of 30.

The Society remained without any settled clergyman until 1777, the pulpit being supplied during that time by occasional application to various individuals.—In 1777 the Society concurred unanimously with the church in giving an invitation to Rev. Samuel Spring to become their pastor. He consented and was ordained in August 1777.

Dr Spring was born in Northbridge in this state February 27th. 1746. His father was an opulent farmer, and gave him the benefit of a public education at Nassau Hall, New-Jersey, where he graduated in 1771.—He spent eight months there as a theological student under the instruction of the celebrated Dr Witherspoon, and completed his course under Drs Hopkins, Bellamy, and West. In 1774 he was licensed to preach; and in 1775, having joined the continental army as chaplain, he followed gen. Arnold as a member of the volunteer corps, which made the disastrous expedition to Canada. The energy of his character was fully developed in this calamitous enterprise, which was attended with the most extreme hardship, and entirely failed of success.—His example and exhortations were eminently useful in

encouraging the troops, and enabling them to sustain the manifold hardships of a winter's march through pathless forests.

At the close of 1776 he left the army, and began to preach in this town at the beginning of the next year. He continued to discharge his pastoral duties with uncommon zeal until within a few weeks of his death, which happened March 4th. 1819.

Whatever difference of opinion there may be in respect to the peculiar political and religious tenets of Dr Spring, all must admit that he supported them with great ardor and ability. His decision of character and intensity of purpose necessarily gave him considerable influence among those of his religious persuasion. Several institutions may trace their establishment in no small degree to his exertions. Among these are Greenville College in Tennessee, the Massachusetts Missionary Society, and the Foreign Mission. And there is no individual, to whose *influence* the Theological Seminary at Andover is more indebted for its being than Dr Spring.

Subsequent to the great fire in Newburyport, he distinguished himself by undertaking a journey to the southern part of the United States to collect contributions for the sufferers by that event.

Beside a number of occasional sermons, he published a Dialogue on Duty and a volume of Disquisitions.*

Dr Spring was succeeded by the present pastor, the Rev. Luther F. Dimmick, who was ordained December 8th 1819. He, as well as each of his predecessors, was called and settled by a unanimous vote of the Society.

The meeting-house of this congregation being very much decayed, they determined, in May last, to construct a new church, on the site of the old one, which will soon be completed.

THE FOURTH RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

Was incorporated in 1794. The meeting-house, in which they worship, in Temple-street, was commenced June 15th 1793, and completed the same year.

* Dr Woods Sermon on the death of Dr Spring.

The church originated in an association of individuals, chiefly members of the First Presbyterian Society, who separated therefrom in 1791 to attend the ministry of the Rev. Charles W. Milton. They first met and worshipped in the house in Milk-street, now occupied by Mr. Jonathan Morss, a part of which was then fitted up as a meeting-house.

Mr. Milton was born in England and educated on the foundation of the countess of Huntingdon. After preaching as a missionary at St. John's in New-Brunswic, he came to this country; and his preaching proving acceptable to a considerable body of persons in this town, gave rise, as before stated, to the establishment of the Fourth Religious Society. He still continues pastor of it.

In 1801 the Society had become so numerous, that it was found necessary to enlarge the meeting-house.

The church government of the Society is agreeable, in most respects, to the congregational form; and they are usually classed in that order of christians. But they do not consider themselves subject to any ecclesiastical council, and are therefore denominated an independent Society.

THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN SOCIETY

Was formed in 1795, by the association of a number of persons for attending the ministry of the Rev. John Boddily. They voluntarily supported Mr. Boddily for sixteen months, paying him at the rate of three hundred and forty dollars per annum, and meeting for worship in the old town-house. In June 1796 they commenced building a meeting-house in Harris street, which was completed in that year.

They were then incorporated by the legislature according to the provisions of the act governing the other Religious Societies in the town.

The first meeting of the Society was holden May 3d 1797, at which it was voted to give Mr. Boddily a call as stated pastor of the Society, and to pay him a yearly salary of five hundred dollars. It was voted to collect the salary by public contribution to be paid in equal

proportions on the first Lord's day of every month, each person contributing to mark his name on his money, and to be credited for the same towards his tax by the collector. The invitation to Mr. Boddily was give without a single dissenting voice, and he was publicly installed as minister of the church and Society June 28th 1797.

Mr. Boddily died November 4th 1802, aged 47. He was born in England, and educated at the countess of Huntington's College. After preaching at Westbury in Wiltshire, and Wallingford in Westmoreland, he emigrated to this country, and soon formed a congregation in Newburyport.

In April 1803, immediately after the death of Mr. Boddily, the Society invited the Rev. John Giles to become their pastor. He accepted the invitation and was installed July 20th of the same year. He continued to be pastor of the Society upwards of twenty one years, dying September 28th 1824 aged 66.

Mr. Giles was born and educated in England. He commenced the ministry at the age of 19, and was for nine years pastor of a dissenting church in Wellington, Somersetshire. Feeling 'a strong partiality to the free constitution and republican principles' of our government, he left the congregation in Wellington, designing to make this country his home. He yielded, however, to the solicitations of his friends in Exeter to take charge of a church there for a time; after which, in 1798, he came to America. On his arrival here, he preached first in Trumbull in Connecticut and afterwards in Elizabethtown in New Jersey. He declined an invitation unanimously given him by a society in Elizabethtown to become their pastor; and returning to Trumbull, was their minister for about two years:—From whence, at the invitation of the First Presbyterian Society, he removed to Newburyport.*

In August 1824 the Rev. William Ford was ordained as a colleague with Mr. Giles; and continued minister of the Society until February 1826, when he resigned the pastoral charge on account of his health.

* Rev. S. P Williams' Funeral Sermon October 1824.

In March 1826 the Society invited the Rev. Dr Daniel Dana, formerly of Newburyport and then of Londonderry, to become their pastor. He was accordingly settled, to remain in the pastoral relation to the Society so long as should be mutually acceptable to the parties, the party desiring a charge to assign reasons satisfactory to the Presbytery or a proper council.

In 1822 this Society adopted the practise, which they still follow, of collecting all their parochial taxes by an assessment on the pews of the church. A portion of the parish tax, in the other Societies in Newburyport, is assessed on property.

THE FIRST BAPTIST SOCIETY

In Newbury and Newburyport, was incorporated in February 1811. Many years previous to that time, so far back indeed as 1804, a number of persons of the baptist persuasion met and were formed into a church. The first meeting for public worship was July 22d 1804, when Mr. Joshua Chase of Newbury officiated. He preached for the church until June 1805, when he was ordained as an evangelist, and went elsewhere.

The members of the Society assembled at two separate places in Newbury until December, 1805, when they united, and had but one place of worship, and that in Newburyport.

In August 1805 they invited the Rev. John Peake of Barnstable to be their pastor; and he acceded to the invitation.

In 1809 a brick meeting-house was erected in Liberty street for the use of the Society. This building was unfortunately consumed in the great fire; and a new one was constructed in 1812 in Congress-street.—The funds for the construction of it were obtained by the zeal and indefatigable exertions of the Rev. Mr. Peake, in procuring donations from the benevolent and charitable in various parts of the United States.

In 1818 Mr. Peake, at his request, was unwillingly granted a dismission from the pastoral care of the Society. He is now settled as the minister of a baptist Society in Hyannis.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Hosea Wheeler.— Mr. Wheeler was born at Dunbarton, N. H. March 3th 1791. He was graduated at Dartmouth College, which he entered in 1807. In 1817 he joined the baptist church and in 1818 was ordained as pastor of the Baptist Society in Newburyport. In May 1822 he received an invitation to become minister of a baptist church at Eastport; and in consequence soon afterwards asked and received a reluctant dismission from the Society in Newburyport. He died at Eastport in January 1823.

In 1822 the Rev. Josiah Houghton, formerly minister of a church in Readfield in Maine, began to preach for the Society and became their pastor in the spring of the ensuing year; and they still continue under his charge.

MASONIC BODIES.

NEWBURYPORT has long been known by its zeal for the order of free masonry. The prosperity and respectability of the fraternity in this place are mainly attributable, in the first instance, to the exertions of Dr John B. Swett, who settled in the town about the close of the revolutionary war. He was distinguished as an ardent mason, not less than for his genius, his education and science, his generous feelings and his social habits. It is said he was initiated into the mysteries of the Illuminati in Germany; but however this may be, certain it is, that he gave the weight of his character and influence to the establishment of masonry in Newburyport, and succeeded in a remarkable manner. The introduction of the higher degrees is owing, in a considerable measure, to his efforts. Since then the best names in this community may be found in the masonic order.

ST. JOHN'S LODGE is the oldest in town. Its charter is dated 1766; but there are no records of its meetings until 1781. The masters have been Nathaniel Tracy, John Tracy, Stephen Hooper, Michael Hodge, Gilman White, Seth Sweetser, Edward Little, Dr Jonathan G. Johnson, Nathan Chase, Dr Richard S. Spofford, Dr Dean Robinson, John Andrews jr. and Thomas B. White.

ST. PETER'S LODGE, was chartered under the lamented general Warren, then Provincial Grand Master, March 12th 1772.

The masters have been John Brooks, Jonathan Boardman, William Greenough, Edward Rand, Moses Greenleaf, Jonathan Gage, Joshua Greenleaf, Stephen Howard, Abraham Perkins, David Coffin, Amos Toppan, Edward Dorr, Eleazer Johnson, Benjamin Whitmore,

Enoch Plummer Jr. Joseph George, and Francis E. Somerby.

ST. MARK'S LODGE was chartered in 1803 and consecrated July 11th 1804. It is now the largest Lodge in the town, consisting of 113 members. Its masters have been William Weed, William Francis, William Chase, John Moody, William Knapp, John Cook Jr. William Currier, and Ebenezer Bradbury.

A CHAPTER, called King Cyrus' Royal Arch Chapter, was instituted in Newburyport in 1790. The first officers were H. Duplessis, Jonathan Boardman, Jonathan Gage, and Dr John B. Swett. The grand masters previous to 1800 have been H. Duplessis, Dr J. B. Swett, Dudley A. Tyng, Joshua Greenleaf. In 1798 the Grand Chapter of the Northern States was established.

A COUNCIL of Select Masters was organized in May 1822.

THE ENCAMPMENT OF KNIGHTS TEMPLARS was duly organized in 1795. A number of knights had previously met and conferred the degrees; but there was then no regular body acknowledged as a General Encampment in the New-England States. The principal members at that time were Dr Swett, Dudley A. Tyng, Jonathan Gage, Joshua Greenleaf, Nathaniel Knapp, William Wyer, and Samuel Cutler. They were afterwards joined by Abraham Perkins, Samuel Mulliken, Charles Jackson, Jacob Perkins, William Woart, Edward Dorr and others; and uniting with Encampments from various places in Massachusetts and Rhode-Island, established a Grand Encampment for the two States, under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Encampment of the United States. They were organized by a charter from that body, and have regularly held their meetings to the present time.

A CONSISTORY has recently been established at Newburyport, in which all the higher degrees of masonry are conferred.

An association of the masonic bodies has fitted up a Masonic Hall in Newburyport, in a style of uncommon taste, elegance, and liberality, with appropriate furniture and ornaments, of the greatest beauty.

EDUCATION.

THE expenditures of the town of Newburyport for the advancement of public education have never ceased to be fully in proportion to its pecuniary means.— Without bringing into view the noble public donations, which some of its citizens have bestowed upon literary institutions abroad, the assertion can be established by reference merely to the ordinary charges of the public and private schools taught in town.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

For males in Newburyport are four, one grammar school and three writing schools.

The grammar school, in common with other schools of the same kind in other parts of the state, has suffered much by the establishment of academies. When all classes, the rich as well as the poor, depended upon it for the classical instruction of their children, it was an object of more general solicitude, and its character stood higher, than when they looked to another place for the primary education of youth.— But efforts are now making to increase its usefulness, from which better things are anticipated.

Of the three writing schools, one has for several years been taught according to the system of mutual instruction; and the others have recently been conformed more or less completely to the same plan. The centre and the south school houses were purposely erected with a view to that system; and contain every convenience for giving it a fair and full trial.

By an act of the legislature passed the present year,

it was made the duty of the school committee of each town to render an account of the state of public and private primary instruction. From the returns of the school committee of Newburyport, it appears that the sum annually paid for *the instruction* merely of the public schools is \$2939. The number of children attending the public schools is 539 males, and 510 females, in all 1069. Besides those, 33 private schools are taught in town, containing 640 pupils of both sexes, the cost of whose tuition is \$4526.

These calculations were made independently of the Newburyport Academy, which, being placed in Newbury, was comprehended in the school returns of the latter town.

Other institutions for education deserve notice; of which the following are the most important.

THE NEWBURYPORT ACADEMY,

Although situated in the town of Newbury, owes its origin and support chiefly to citizens of Newburyport. It was incorporated in 1807. It is now in a prosperous condition, the male apartment, under the instruction of Mr. Alfred W. Pike, being full, and containing about forty pupils.

THE PUTNAM SCHOOL,

For the endowment of which a large legacy was recently left to the town by the late Mr. Oliver Putnam, a native and formerly a citizen of Newburyport, promises to have the most important influence upon our system of public education.

Oliver Putnam was born at Newburyport in 1778.—His father was a mechanic, and was able to give him nothing but a common school education. But his natural talents were of the first order; and having attained independence at an early age by successful commercial speculations, he devoted himself to the assiduous cultivation of his intellect. His constitution was unfortunately feeble; which prevented his becoming fixed in any particular occupation; and compelled him, for the advantages of a change of climate, to travel in various parts of Europe and America. Had it been otherwise,

the independence and integrity of his character, his sound judgment, his profound practical knowledge, his unimpeachable morals, and his intimate acquaintance with the science of politics and political economy, would soon have fastened upon him the the public eye, and raised him to posts of honor and distinction. But his ill health forbade, and confined the benefit of his superior qualities to the circle of his acquaintance.

During the latter half of his life, he made Boston his place of abode, although passing much of his time on a farm belonging to him in Hampstead, where he died, July 11th 1826. He was never married. By his will, which is dated July 11th 1825, and was proved at the Probate Court in the county of Suffolk, August 14th 1826, after making liberal provision for his kindred, who are all collateral, he makes the devise above mentioned in the following terms :

‘To the said executors* I bequeath and devise in trust the residue of my property, real and personal, to accumulate by the addition of the income or interest as received to the principal, till my nephews arrive of age, and then to be disposed of as follows.’

The will then provides for the payment of a legacy to each of his three nephews ; and concludes thus :

‘These three legacies to my nephews are to be without interest, and to be void should they not live to arrive at twenty one years.

‘The residue of my property I give and bequeath for the establishment and support of a free English school in Newburyport, for the instruction of youth wherever they may belong, and the executors will, if at the final payment of the foregoing legacies it should amount to fifty thousand dollars, pay it over as hereafter provided ; but if, at that time, it should not amount to that sum, the executors will retain it to accumulate till it does, and then pay it over to Trustees for that purpose to be appointed by the Selectmen of Newburyport.— After the appointment of the first Trustees, vacancies in their board to be filled by nomination from them, sub-

* Messrs Aaron Baldwin of Boston, and Edward S. Rand and Caleb Cushing of Newburyport, are named executors in the will. The two first having declined acting, the trust has devolved upon the author of this account

ject to the approval of said Selectmen, who besides are always and at all times to have and exercise the right of visitation, for the purpose of looking to the security of the funds, and that the interest or income of them is applied according to the bequest. In the selection of Trustees, no reference is to be had to their places of residence, but only to their qualification for the trust.

‘The Trustees are to invest the principal in good and sufficient securities, bearing interest or producing income to the satisfaction of the said Selectmen, to be and remain a permanent fund, the interest or income only of which to be applied to the establishment and support of the school. The youth to be instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and particularly in the English language, and in those branches of knowledge necessary to the correct management of the ordinary affairs of life, whether public or private, but *not* in the dead languages. The monitorial system of instruction to be introduced and used, so far as it may be found on experience that it can be done with advantage.’

Such are the provisions of the will in regard to this munificent foundation. Should the institution be established under favorable auspices, it cannot fail to prove a signal public blessing. The beautiful and salubrious situation of Newburyport,—its freedom from the evils of too close proximity to any city united with the easy communication between it and the great capitals of the country,—and the economy of living among its inhabitants, present a body of striking advantages for the location of a seminary of education. And the school, which the wise and benevolent testator contemplated, is evidently one peculiarly necessary in the present times, when men are acquiring increased conviction of the superior value of practical education, over that handed down to us from a less intelligent age.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS

Were established under the care of the Sabbath School and Tract Society. This Society was originally designed for the distribution of religious tracts; but now discharges the additional duty of superintending the

Sunday schools. These were commenced in 1817, and were composed of children of both sexes from all the religious societies in town, to the number of about six hundred. It has been regularly continued ever since during the summer months; and the average number attending has been four hundred. The whole number instructed in the school, from 1817 to 1825, was 1249, namely, 528 males, 721 females. Other schools in the vicinity of the town are under superintendence of the same Society, making the whole number who have received their instruction, in all the schools, about 1600.

DUMMER ACADEMY

Although it is not strictly speaking embraced within the scope of this work, yet is located so near to Newburyport that an account of it may not be deemed misplaced here.

It was founded by the munificence of William Dummer, at his country seat in the parish of Byfield in the town of Newbury, about four miles from Newburyport.

The name of Dummer is among the oldest and most respectable in Massachusetts. Richard Dummer was one of the fathers of the Colony. He emigrated in 1635 and was chosen a member of the court of assistants, in which he served for several years:—after which he retired to his estate in Newbury, and greatly contributed by his wealth and liberality to the growth of Byfield parish.—His farm descended in his family to William Dummer, who was appointed lieutenant governor of the Province in 1716. In 1730 he retired from this office and soon afterwards from all public employments, living to a good old age in the enjoyment of the respect of his contemporaries. He filled the governor's chair at two several periods, seven years in all, and his administration was esteemed eminently wise and just.

At his decease he devised all his estate in Newbury, consisting in part of the original Dummer farm, to Charles Chauncey, Thomas Foxcraft and Nathaniel Dummer, for the erection of a school-house and the endowment of a free grammar school upon the farm.—The school was established there accordingly in 1763. By the will the election of a preceptor was vested in

the minister of Byfield parish for the time being and a committee of the parish chosen for that purpose ; and he was removeable by the government of Harvard college. In 1782 Dr Chauncey, being the sole surviving executor of the will, deemed it necessary to obtain an act of the legislature appointing perpetual trustees to receive and manage the fund and superintend the institution. The first board of trustees were Jeremiah Powell, Benjamin Greenleaf, Jonathan Greenleaf, Rev. Joseph Willard, Pres. of Harvard College, Rev. Charles Chauncey, Rev. Moses Parsons, Rev. John Tucker, Rev. Thomas Cary, Samuel Moody, the Preceptor, William Powell, Dr Micajah Sawyer, Dummer Jewett, Samuel Osgood, Nathaniel Tracy, and Richard Dummer.— They were incorporated by the name of the Trustees of Dummer Academy ; and they and their successors have had the direction of the Academy to the present day.

As a classical grammar school Dummer Academy has deservedly held a high rank ; and many celebrated persons in church and state have commenced their public education in its rural seclusion. At the present time, its Trustees have thought that the Academy might be of greater service to the public, if converted into a school of practical and agricultural instruction, than as a school for instruction in the languages. Applications have repeatedly been made to the legislature for aid in such a laudable enterprise ; but although all men admit that the exigencies of society require an institution of this kind and the Dummer farm presents the greatest facilities for its establishment, yet a too cautious policy has induced the legislature to refuse the assistance prayed for. Some little jealousy, too, seemed to betray itself in certain quarters, towards an institution situated so near ‘ the hem of the state,’ as its location was rather scornfully described by the opponents of the plan.

The first preceptor of the Academy was Samuel Moody, who continued to have charge of it until 1789. He attained great celebrity for his talents as a teacher and the originality of his character. When the act incorporating the trustees of the Academy was passed, a section was inserted securing to him all the rights he

enjoyed under the original foundation, and making him in fact independent of the Trustees. Under his care the Academy was for a long time the most flourishing in the country ;—and the respectability, in after life, of many of his pupils has perpetuated the name of *master Moody*.

Since then the instructors have been

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------|-------|
| Rev. Isaac Smith, | elected in | 1790, |
| Dr Benjamin Allen, | | 1809, |
| Rev. Abiel Abbott, | | 1811, |
| Hon. Samuel Adams, | | 1819, |
| Mr. Nehemiah Cleaveland, | | 1821, |

who is the present preceptor.

LITERARY ASSOCIATIONS.

THE NEWBURYPORT ATHENÆUM

Was incorporated in 1810. The object of the founders is declared in the act of incorporation, was to establish a repository for valuable and rare productions in the various arts, sciences, and polite literature, and for collecting the most important tracts, pamphlets, and documents, illustrative of the natural and civil history of our country, of the genius, policy, and laws of the general and state governments, and of the manners, customs, and interests of the American people.—The proprietors laid the foundations of a respectable library, which has received occasional additions by donation or purchase.—But institutions of this kind are best fitted for a numerous and wealthy community, because in any others, the accumulation of valuable books must be too expensive to proceed with much rapidity by means of the intrinsic resources of the inhabitants.—For this reason the present state of the Athenæum probably is not equal to the plan or expectations of its founders.

THE FRANKLIN LIBRARY

Was instituted in 1812, by an association of respectable mechanics, whose chief object at that time was to raise a joint fund for the purchase of Ree's Cyclopædia.—Upon this foundation a library was begun, which has gradually increased. The association is a praiseworthy instance of the cultivation of a taste for knowledge among a class of men, whose weight and value in the community are daily rising in public estimation.

THE NEWBURYPORT DEBATING SOCIETY

Was originally instituted January 5th 1821, by a number of gentlemen desirous to improve in declamation and extemporaneous discussion. At the first meeting suitable regulations for the conduct of the Society were adopted, and they continued to meet weekly for the purposes of their institution.

In April 1821 the numbers and respectability of the Society having much increased, it was found necessary to adopt a new set of bye laws, more complete and systematic in their nature.

This year the Society as a body commenced the practice of celebrating the anniversary of American independence, which they have continued until now, with but one year's intermission. Their meetings were suspended July 4th, until the next autumn.

The Society continued to meet through the winter and spring of 1821-2, and until the close of January 1823, when it was dissolved, for the purpose of establishing a new one of a more popular and public description. The new Society consisted not merely of persons desirous to engage in its regular exercises, but of a large number of others, who joined as auditors only.

In December 1824, in consequence of the dispersion of some of the active members of the Society, and other causes, it was dissolved; and a new one formed of a private nature, similar to the original Society; which having undergone occasional changes in its constitution and members, now exists.

The Society has chosen, for orators on the fourth of July,

| | | |
|----------------------|----|-------|
| Caleb Cushing, | in | 1821, |
| Robert Cross, | in | 1822, |
| George C. Wilde, | in | 1823, |
| Nehemiah Cleaveland, | in | 1824, |
| John Merrill, | in | 1826. |

This Society has proved of eminent advantage to many persons, who have participated in its exercises; and its example is sufficient to demonstrate the utility of such institutions, when properly conducted. The popular character of our government renders the accom-

plishment of extemporaneous oratory peculiarly valuable, not only to professional men, but to all, who feel a lively interest, and take a prominent part, in the progress of national, state, or municipal affairs.—And a well regulated debating society is an excellent school of instruction and experience in this important qualification.

THE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Was formed in 1818. It consists of physicians, who united for the purpose of promoting regularity in the practice of their profession, and communicating medical information, and in other respects aiding the cause of medical science.

THE NEWBURYPORT LINNEAN SOCIETY

Was instituted in 1820, by a number of gentlemen, whose object was to promote the study of natural history and antiquities, by making a collection of minerals, and other curiosities.—Their design has proved so far successful, that they possess a cabinet of considerable value, which is gradually acquiring new specimens, chiefly by donations.

MILITIA.

IN 1810 the town of Newburyport contained a full regiment of militia; but in consequence of the reduction of the population, the citizens were reorganized in 1817 into a battalion, commanded by a lieutenant colonel. For this purpose the town is divided into three wards, each ward furnishing a company of infantry. In addition to these bodies, there are two volunteer companies, the Newburyport Artillery Company, and the Washington Light Infantry Company; all which together compose the organized militia of Newburyport.

THE NEWBURYPORT ARTILLERY COMPANY is nearly coeval with our national independence, and one of the oldest military corps in the Commonwealth. It was formed in the winter of 1777-8 and in July 1778 marched as volunteers in the expedition to Rhode Island, where they remained in service until the unsuccessful termination of that enterprise.

Its first officers were Thomas Thomas, captain; David Coates, captain lieutenant, then so called; and Michael Hodge first, and Samuel Newhall second, lieutenant. The company consisted of about eighty men, and were armed with muskets and two four pounders, one of brass and one of iron, which they received from the State in Boston on their march. These pieces were exchanged in 1793 for two beautiful six pounders, which they still possess. In 1795 Michael Hodge was elected captain, Benaiah Thcomb captain lieutenant, and William Cross and Lnoch Greenleaf lieutenants.

In 1791 a regiment was ordered to be formed of the artillery of the county of Essex, and at a meeting of the officers at Ipswich, captain Hodge was elected colonel. But before this organization could be fully completed,

a different arrangement of the Artillery Companies in the south part of the county was concluded upon; and the Company remained, until 1794, not attached to any regimental corps.

In 1792 the company was newly organized, and William Cross was elected captain, and Enoch Greenleaf and Samuel Brown lieutenants.

In 1794 a battalion was formed of this and another company at Amesbury, and captain Cross was promoted to its command. This organization has continued to the present time.

In 1801 the Company, at an expense to themselves of about \$300, erected a handsome and spacious gun-house.

After the disbandment of the sea-fencibles, a volunteer Company formed during the last war, the gun-house erected for their accommodation was assigned by the Quarter Master General to the Artillery Company. The old gun-house has since been refitted by the town for public military uses.

In 1820 the Company furnished themselves with serviceable camp equipage, and have since annually performed tours of camp duty through the various towns of the brigade.

In 1824 they participated in the military honors rendered La Fayette.

The gentlemen, who have successively held the office of captain, since the year 1794, are Enoch Greenleaf, Jonathan Stickney, Benjamin Somerby, Thomas Burrill, James Potter, Joseph Hoyt, Richard Hunnewell, Jeremiah Batchelder, Samuel Coffin, Ebenezer Bradbury, and Enoch Pierce, who is the present commander.*

THE WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY COMPANY, was raised in 1800, by virtue of a resolve of the General Court passed that year. On the 15th of April they made choice of Abraham Perkins, Nicholas Tracy, and Charles Jackson for their commissioned officers. Their first public appearance took place July 24th 1800, which day has since then been observed as the Company's anniversary. The gentlemen, who have held the commis-

* The author is indebted to maj. Ebenezer Bradbury for the above account of the Artillery Company.

sion of captain in the company down to the present time, are Abraham Perkins, Samuel W. Thompson, Nicholas Johnson jr., Paul Titcomb, Charles H. Balch, Eleazer Johnson jr., Philip Johnson jr., Jeremiah P. Toppan, and William B. Titcomb.

In 1824 during the war, the Company performed guard duty at the barracks on Plum Island as volunteers.

In July 1807 the Company received President Monroe, and escorted him into the town.

In August 1817 the regiment of which the Company formed a part, and with it the Company, being disbanded, a new charter was obtained January following, and the company was reorganized, by the choice of Charles H. Balch, Eleazer Johnson jr., and Philip Johnson jr. as officers.

This Company, with the Artillery, escorted General La Fayette into the town, on the occasion of his public reception and entertainment, August 31st 1824.

STATISTICS.

UNDER this head will be placed a variety of statements of a miscellaneous character, chiefly as to the population, wealth, public expenditures, commerce, manufactures, and business condition of the town.

POPULATION.

The following table, collected from various sources, contains a view of the progressive increase of the population of Newburyport until 1810, and its subsequent diminution.

| Years. | Inhab. | Houses. |
|--------|--------|---------|
| 1764 | 2,882 | 357 |
| 1790 | 4,837 | 616 |
| 1800 | 5,946 | 806 |
| 1810 | 7,634 | — |
| 1820 | 6,789 | — |

At the last Census in 1820 Newburyport contained

| Families. | Widows. | Males. | Females. |
|-----------|---------|--------|----------|
| 1196 | 380 | 3085 | 3704 |

PROPERTY.

The following table exhibits an account of all the property owned or possessed in Newburyport, as rated by the town-assessors, for the several years enumerated.

| Years. | Real Estate. | Person. Estate. | Real & Person. |
|--------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1802 | 1248200 | 2506720 | 3754920 |
| 1803 | 1360750 | 2605900 | 3966650 |
| 1804 | | | |
| 1805 | | | |
| 1806 | 2165400 | 4152633 | 6318033 |

| | | | |
|------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1807 | 2420200 | 4307900 | 6728100 |
| 1808 | 2318700 | 4175500 | 6494200 |
| 1809 | 2584300 | 4442200 | 7026500 |
| 1810 | 2825100 | 4243900 | 7069000 |
| 1811 | 2810400 | 4271100 | 7081500 |
| 1812 | 2635900 | 3438700 | 6074600 |
| 1813 | 1940300 | 2799700 | 4740900 |
| 1814 | 1671300 | 2478700 | 4151000 |
| 1815 | 1500400 | 2352800 | 3853200 |
| 1816 | 1373000 | 2111600 | 3484600 |
| 1817 | 1269600 | 1869600 | 3139200 |
| 1818 | 1249300 | 1910000 | 3159300 |
| 1819 | 1251000 | 1793900 | 3014900 |
| 1820 | 1707600 | 1154000 | 2861600 |
| 1821 | 1612000 | 1031700 | 2643700 |
| 1822 | 1549500 | 1040400 | 2589900 |
| 1823 | 1492600 | 1056700 | 2549300 |
| 1824 | 1347300 | 1058000 | 2405300 |
| 1825 | 1321100 | 1018500 | 2342600 |
| 1826 | 1419200 | 1003600 | 2422800 |

TOWN EXPENSES.

The following table contains a summary view of the expenses of the town for the municipal year ending March 1825.

| | |
|--|--------|
| Repairing the Highways, including \$1329 for work by men from the Work-House and Town teams, | \$3518 |
| Grammar School Master, | 600 |
| West Lancasterian ditto, | 600 |
| South do. do. | 550 |
| North Writing do. | 450 |
| Three Mistresses of Female Grammar Schools, | 225 |
| Five Mistresses of small schools, | 250 |
| Mistress of the African School, | 53 |
| Rewards for Lancasterian Scholars, | 73 |
| Wood for Schools, | 69 |
| Repairing and altering School houses, and sundries for Schools, | 266 |
| Assessors, | 258 |
| Treasurer and Collector, | 311 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| Overseers of the Poor, | 200 |
| Town-Clerk, | 54 |
| Police Officer, | 10 |
| Constable, | 60 |
| Sextons, | 81 |
| Engines, Pumps, and Fire implements, | 97 |
| Market-House, | 151 |
| Visit of General La Fayette, | 775 |
| Repairing Hospital and expenses arising from Small Pox, | 256 |
| Mall, | 105 |
| Maintenance and support of the Poor, | 2687 |
| Interest on the town debt, deducting income of the market-house, | 430 |
| Incidental charges, | 331 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 12460 |

MONOPOLY ACT.

Many attempts were made during the revolutionary war to fix the price of labor and commodities by legislative provisions. All these endeavors, of course, proved entirely futile. In 1777 the selectmen of Newburyport, pursuant to an act of the general court 'to prevent monopoly and oppression' fixed the prices of things for this town. The following table contains an abstract, in alphabetical order, of their regulations.

| Articles. | Prices. | | | Quan. |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| | <i>l.</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> | |
| Beef, best fresh stall fed | | | 4 | lb. |
| do. do. gr ss do. | | | 3 | lb. |
| salted (bbl 240 lbs.) | 3 | 11 | 0 | bbl. |
| Beans, | | 6 | 0 | bush. |
| Blubber, refined | 1 | 10 | 0 | l ^{bl} . |
| Boards good white p. merch. | 2 | 5 | 0 | M. |
| Butter, | | | 10 | lb. |
| Calf-skins, raw | | | 6 | lb. |
| Chaise-hire, | | | 3 | 1-2 mile |
| Charcoal. | | | 6 | bush. |
| Cheese, best American, | | | 6 | bush. |
| Chocolate do do. | | 1 | 8 | bush |
| Cloth cotton and linen yd. wide | | 3 | 6 | lb. |

| Articles. | Prices. | | | Quan. |
|-----------------------------------|---------|----|----|----------|
| | l. | s. | d. | |
| Cloth tow yd. wide | | 2 | 3 | yd. |
| best American woolen | | 9 | 0 | yd. |
| Cocoa, best, | 6 | 10 | 0 | cwt. |
| Cod-fish, fresh, | | | 1 | lb. |
| Coffee, good | | 1 | 4 | lb. |
| Cotton by the bag, | | 3 | 0 | lb. |
| Eggs, | | | 6 | doz. |
| Flax, good merchantable, | | 1 | 0 | lb. |
| Flour, southern | 1 | 10 | | cwt. |
| Massachusetts, | 1 | 5 | | cwt. |
| Hay, best English, | | 4 | 6 | cwt. |
| Hides, raw, | | | 3 | lb. |
| tanned | | 1 | 4 | lb. |
| Hogshead, good, 44 inc. long, | | 4 | 0 | each |
| Horse-hire, | | | 4 | 1-2 mile |
| Indian corn or meal | | 4 | 0 | bush. |
| Iron, bloomery, | 1 | 10 | 0 | cwt. |
| refined, | 2 | 10 | 0 | cwt. |
| Labor, viz. | | | | |
| Carpenters, | | 5 | 4 | day |
| Caulkers, | | 6 | 0 | day |
| Day laborers, not found | | 4 | 0 | day |
| found | | 3 | 0 | day |
| Joiners, | | 4 | 8 | day |
| Masons, | | 6 | 0 | day |
| Barbers once shaving, | | | 3 | |
| Coopers find. and set. hhd. hoop. | | | 4 | |
| bbl. do. | | | 2 | 1-2 |
| Curriers, leather | | 5 | 0 | hide |
| call skins, | | 1 | 0 | piece |
| Teamsters 2 ox. and 1 horse | 12 | 0 | | day |
| Truckage hhd. 1-2 mile, | 1 | 4 | | |
| bbl. do. do. | | | 6 | |
| Milk, | | | 3 | qt. |
| Mutton, lamb or veal, | | | 4 | lb. |
| Oats, | | 2 | 0 | bush. |
| Oil, liver, by the bbl. | | 4 | 0 | gal. |
| Peas, | | 8 | 0 | bush. |
| Pork, fresh best, | | | 5 | lb. |
| salted (bbl. 220 lbs.) | 4 | 12 | 0 | bbl. |
| Potatoes best from 1s. 2d. to | | 1 | 8 | bush. |

| Articles. | Prices. | | | Quar. |
|-------------------------------------|---------|----|-----|-------|
| | l. | s. | d. | |
| Rum, W. I. by the hhd. includ. hhd. | | 6 | 8 | gal. |
| gallon, | | 7 | 8 | gal. |
| quart, | | 2 | 0 | qt. |
| N. F. by the hhd. exclud hhd. | | 3 | 10 | gal. |
| gallon | | 4 | 6 | gal. |
| Rye or rye-meal good, | | 5 | 0 | bush. |
| Salt, good imported, | | 10 | 0 | do |
| domestic manufac. | | 12 | 0 | do |
| Shingles, good shipping, | | 11 | 0 | M |
| Shoes, best men's neat's leather | | 8 | 0 | pair |
| Shoeing a horse all around, | | 7 | 0 | |
| Staves, red oak hhd | 2 | 10 | 0 | M. |
| Stockings, best men's woolen | | 6 | 0 | pair |
| Sugar, best Muscov. the hhd. | 2 | 14 | 0 | cwt. |
| by the cwt. | 3 | 0 | 0 | |
| lb. | | | 8 | lb. |
| Tallow, good tried, | | 7 | 1-2 | |
| Taverns, viz. | | | | |
| Horse, keep. w. Eng. hay 24 h. | | | | |
| or night, | | 2 | 0 | |
| Dinner boiled and roast. without | | | | |
| wine, | | 1 | 6 | |
| Supper or breakfast, | | 1 | 0 | |
| Lodging, | | | 4 | |
| Tobacco raised in this state, | | | 6 | lb. |
| Wheat, good merch. | | 7 | 6 | bush. |
| Wood, good Eastern, | 1 | 1 | 0 | cord. |
| Wool, good sheep's | | 2 | 0 | lb. |
| Turkies, poultry, and ducks, | | | 5 | |

The foregoing are the highest prices, which were never to be exceeded. The regulations further provided that no imported goods, except hemp and warlike or military stores, should be sold at an advance of more than £ 250 on £100 prime cost in Europe. And to enforce this rule, every seller by wholesale was required to deliver the buyer a bill of parcels with the sterling cost and his advance thereon, under penalty of a forfeiture of the whole value for his neglect. No retailer was permitted to make an advance of more than twenty per cent. on the wholesale price; and he was to deliver a bill of parcels if requested.

BANKING AND INSURANCE.

INSURANCE, in this town, is now conducted either by private individuals, or by agents of Boston Insurance Companies. There have been three incorporated companies in this town, namely, the Merrimac Marine, the Union, and the Phenix Insurance Companies. These were all dissolved at successive periods; and the lowness of premiums has rendered it unprofitable for any incorporated office to transact business in this town alone.

There are two banks, the Newburyport, and Mechanics.

THE NEWBURYPORT BANK was incorporated in 1812, with a capital of \$300,000, reduced in 1814 to \$210,000, at which it now remains.

This Bank is the successor of the Merrimac Bank, incorporated in 1725, which commenced business with a capital of \$70,000. In 1799 the Newburyport Bank was incorporated. In 1800 it was dissolved and its stock was united with that of the Merrimac Bank. The stock of the Merrimac Bank paid in, amounted in 1801 to \$225,000. In 1803 a new bank was incorporated by the name of the Newburyport Bank with a capital of \$300,000. In 1805 the charter of the Merrimac Bank expired; and the stock of the Newburyport Bank was increased \$250,000, the stockholders of Merrimac Bank having a right to subscribe this sum in the stock of the Newburyport. By this operation, the capital of the Newburyport Bank, in 1805, was \$550,000. Its charter expired in 1812, at which time the present bank was incorporated.

THE MECHANICS BANK was incorporated in 1812, with a capital of \$200,000. It has not undergone any legal changes as a corporation, and now transacts banking business upon the same capital.

In connexion with the subject of Banking, the press for bank bills of the stereotype STEEL PLATE, established in Newburyport, deserves to be mentioned. Bank-notes have become a universal substitute for specie in this country as the circulating medium of traffic. Hence it is of the greatest importance to prevent, if possible, the counterfeiting of bills. Long experience has demon-

strated that Mr. Jacob Perkins, improvements in the art of engraving afford the best specific of this kind, which has yet been discovered; and leave nothing to be desired but that all banks should be *compelled* to use the steel plate, if they are so regardless of the public good as not to do it voluntarily.

The printing press for these bills is in the hands of Mr. Abraham Perkins, brother of Mr. Jacob Perkins, and the agent of that great artist for the New England States. The peculiar advantages of the plate containing his improvements are many and evident. One is the exact similarity of all the bills. A copperplate, after yielding six or seven thousand impressions, becomes worn down and must be retouched with the graver:—Which of course makes a difference in the appearance of the bills. The steel plate, on the contrary, affords an immense number of prints before the lines on the plate are worn, or the impression changed. Another advantage possessed by the steel plate is the quantity and delicacy of their work, and the endless multiplicity of minute letters graven upon them, which it is idle for the forger to think of imitating with success. The check letter on the back of Perkins' bills, as well as the beautiful lathe-work on their face, are likewise peculiarities, which have seldom or never been skilfully counterfeited. In short, these and other excellencies of the stereotype bills are such as to baffle the art of counterfeiters, who readily succeed in forging bills difficult to be distinguished from the best of any other description. The quantity of work on Perkins' bills imparts to them a certain heaviness of appearance, which some persons have appeared to think a ground of objection. But nothing, certainly, is more idle and ridiculous than to prefer a mere pretty bill to a safe one. In truth, however, there are few plates, which give a more neat, finished, and graceful impression, than those which come from the graver of Murray and Fairman.*

Mr. Perkins prints bills for about *seventy* banks.

* Newburyport Herald for May 28th 1822.

SHIP BUILDING.

As Newburyport possesses no site with water powers, it does not afford facilities for the establishment of those manufactories, which require the application of a great moving force to complicated machinery. It has local advantages for two manufactures, however, which have, in time past, been the source of much wealth to its inhabitants. These are the distillation of rum, and ship-building; to which the citizens, in their memorial to congress in 1774, attributed a prominent rank in the enumeration of their business.

SHIP-BUILDING has long been known as a staple manufacture of the towns on the Merrimac. The river was distinguished, at an early period, for producing good timber, skillful and industrious carpenters, and staunch vessels.* Old inhabitants of the town can remember when there have been a hundred vessels building at one time along the bank of the river on the Newbury side below the bridge. Formerly there were several ship yards in the town of Newburyport. The landing-place in Market square was long used for that purpose, and called the *middle ship-yard*. But the increase of the commerce of the town subsequent to 1800 produced a change in this respect; and all the principal ship-yards are now in Newbury and Salisbury.

The historian Douglas, while he reflects upon the ship builders of Newbury to the advantage of those of Boston, admits that better vessels were built here than at any other place in the country. It may be inferred from his account, however, that when the carpenters of the Merrimac slighted their work, it was owing less to themselves than to the cupidity of the foreign merchants who dealt with them. They built a large number of vessels for the British market; and oftentimes were compelled to employ materials of less excellence, to meet the illiberality of a gripping contractor abroad.—In illustration of this Douglas relates the following anecdote. ‘As contracts (he says) are generally to be paid in goods, they build accordingly. Thus a noted

* Douglas' Summary, vol. I, page 456.

builder (1751) T. W. jocosely said that *he had built for — a calico-ship.**

The Boston and Hancock continental frigates were built here; and the Merimac and Wasp, sloops of war. The government of the United States, in establishing ship-yards at various places along the coast, have hardly done justice to the Merrimac, in passing over a situation, where ships of war of the smaller class could be constructed to great advantage.

The number of vessels built on the Merrimac has greatly diminished within the last fifteen or twenty years. But facilities for carrying on this business may still be found here, to greater extent than at most other places in the State. Many large forests of the noblest oak over-shadow the sides of the Merrimac; the mechanics upon its banks have lost none of their excellence in the art of ship-building; and the cheapness of rent and of the means of subsistence there enables them to afford labor at a moderate compensation, and would therefore lessen the cost of building and of naval equipments.

Nothing is wanted to restore the naval business of the town to its former vigor but to have this manufacture of ships carried on by a company with adequate capital — They might import, themselves, the iron, hemp, sail-cloth, copper and other articles used in building, and thus save the freight upon those commodities. And by carrying on the business systematically and economically, it would seem that they could not but succeed.

There is hardly any single object, which would more decidedly tend to renovate the prosperity of the town, than ship-building carried on extensively. There is no species of manufacture, which would be more beneficial to all the industrious classes of the community. It has been estimated that when a vessel built in New-England is wholly fitted for sea, two thirds of her cost are a clear profit to the country, the other third being iron, cordage, and other imported articles. The ship manufactory employs and supports more than thirty two distint trades; while it is a business eminently

* Douglas' Summary, vol. II, page 69.

healthful in all its branches, manly, and admirably calculated to no rish a race of active and hardy yeomanry.*

DISTILLERIES.

The close intercourse of this town with the West India islands gave it early advantages in the importation of molasses and the distillation of rum. The quantity of this commodity manufactured in the town has varied exceedingly at different periods; although less for the last ten or fifteen years. In 1820, when the census was taken, it was calculated that four distilleries in the town consumed 3000 hogsheads of molasses annually.—On the rum produced, it was supposed that about one fifth was exported to foreign countries, and the rest disposed of in the United States. There may be about 3600 hogsheads distilled the present year.

In the year 1790 there were ten distilleries in the town; and in 1808 there were eight;—but although the number of distilleries now is diminished, the quantity of rum produced is not probably much, if any, less than it was at the former periods.

MARITIME COMMERCE.

The trade of Newburyport has at some periods been very large, and although much diminished now, is still quite considerable.

The following table exhibits the amount of tonnage belonging to Newburyport at the several years specified.

| | | |
|------|------------------|------------|
| 1789 | 99 vessels | 11607 tons |
| 1796 | Registered 16179 | |
| | Enrolled 3573 | |
| | <hr/> | |
| | | 19752 do. |
| 1806 | Registered 25291 | |
| | Enrolled 4422 | |
| | <hr/> | |
| | | 29713 do. |

* Two or three of the above remarks are in the Newburyport Herald, Aug 20, 1822.

| | | |
|------|------------|-------|
| 1816 | Registered | 16331 |
| | Enrolled | 7170 |

23501 tons

| | | |
|--------|------------|-------|
| 1826 * | Registered | 7503 |
| | Enrolled | 12991 |

20194 do.

The duties on imports have been

| | | |
|----|------|----------|
| in | 1792 | \$ 74248 |
| | 1802 | 200695 |
| | 1812 | 46191 |
| | 1822 | 58451 |
| | 1826 | 49966 |

The value of merchandize imported

| | | | |
|----|------|-----|----------|
| in | 1821 | was | \$193119 |
| | 1826 | | 166811 |

The value of domestic merchandize exported was

| | | |
|----|------|----------|
| in | 1791 | \$685124 |
| | 1806 | 543576 |
| | 1817 | 253652 |
| | 1826 | 190720 |

In November 1790 there were owned in Newburyport 6 ships, 45 brigs, 39 schooners, 23 sloops, in all 11,370 tons.

In November 1805 there belonged to Newburyport 41 ships, 62 brigs, 2 snows, 2 barques, and 66 schooners, besides sloops not enumerated.

From these data, the reader can judge of the progressive changes in the maritime commerce of the town. It would be found, by comparing its shipping in 1805 with that of other seaports in the country, that no where was industry more lively and enterprising than here, in the days of our commercial prosperity.

FISHERIES.

The fishing vessels belonging to this District are not owned in the town of Newburyport alone, but a portion of them in the vicinity.

* Where the year 1826 is mentioned it means the year ending June 30th 1826.

In 1806 the number of vessels belonging to the District employed in the Labrador fishing was 45, and 10 or 15 more in the Bay fishery. These vessels averaged 12 men each, and caught in the season 5000 quintals of fish each. The mackerel fishery was then very small.

The latter branch of our fisheries was not commenced, to any extent, until since the late war.

The first vessel fitted out in this District to carry on the mackerel fishing for the season was in 1815. But in 1819 the number of vessels so employed amounted to about 30, and the quantity of mackerel caught to about 15000 barrels.

The number of vessels employed in the year 1825 was 75, and the quantity of mackerel caught amounted to 24000 barrels.

The average quantity of fish taken in the cod-fishery, by vessels belonging to this District, for the last ten years, has been about 20,000 quintals, averaging about \$50000 in value. This business probably employs 300 men.

The sum paid in this District for bounties for the year 1825 was \$14998.

It has been already stated that the amount of registered tonnage belonging to this town at present was 7503, of enrolled 12991 tons. At former periods the case was reversed, and the tonnage registered was much greater than the tonnage enrolled.

From this it appears that the coasting and fishing business of the town has much increased within a few years, and in proportion as the foreign commerce has diminished.

The fishing business has proved highly beneficial to the south part of the town and the contiguous parts of Newbury, where it is chiefly carried on. This fact is apparent from the evidently improved appearance and increasing prosperity of that quarter.

Much as we have cause to lament the diminution of our foreign trade, still the prosperity of our fisheries and of the coastwise trade is a subject of much gratulation. No maritime occupation is more healthful and manly, or better calculated to nourish a race of hardy

mariners, than our fisheries. There is no business, which is more purely a profit on labor than this; and it is, therefore, peculiarly deserving encouragement as a branch of domestic industry.

The coasting trade of the United States is constantly increasing; and even now employs a much greater tonnage than the foreign. The subjoined remarks are applicable to the fisheries as well as to our domestic marine commerce.*

“Navigation in the coasting trade, in respect to its influence in exciting to production in the different divisions of industry, operates with double the effect that our navigation in foreign trade does, because our foreign navigation divides its influence, employing one half of it at home to the encouragement of home industry, and carrying the other half abroad to the equal encouragement of foreign industry. Whereas the coast-wise navigation, though it divides its influence between the places it connects in intercourse, yet employs the whole of it at home, to the encouragement of home production.—Our inland and coast-wise trade is beyond comparison more important to national interests than our foreign commerce. It employs more tons of navigation than the foreign; and the vessels it employs make several interchanges of merchandise, while the vessels employed in the foreign trade are making but one. It employs more capital, in proportion as the amount of goods to be exchanged by it is greater; and the capital employed affords equal profit in proportion to its amount. The home market for the surplus products of our various industry, with the exception of two or three articles of southern produce, is probably of four times the extent of the foreign market.”

MISCELLANEOUS.

In the year 1825 there were 10 manufactories of fur and plated HATS of different qualities in Newburyport and its vicinity. Their whole capital was estimated at \$17,500 and they employed in all 65 persons.

* Practical Principles of Political Economy, page 32

It is calculated that 90 persons are employed in the town in the manufacture of SHOES and BOOTS, and that the value of their products amounts annually to \$50,000.

LAIRD'S BEER, PORTER and ALE, are well known in the United States. Mr. Laird emigrated to this country from Scotland, and commenced brewing here in 1785.—The gradual increase of the business obliged him to enlarge his works at successive periods, first in 1789, and afterwards in 1793. The present works were erected in 1793 and are capable of producing upwards of 5000 barrels annually. It is of the first quality and of established reputation.

In Newbury near to the bounds of Newburyport there are extensive CORDAGE manufactories. They were five in number in 1803—1805, employing from 40 to 50 hands, and producing annually from 200 to 300 tons of cordage, valued at about \$70,000. For the last five years the number of manufactories has been six, the number of persons employed 25 to 35, the quantity of cordage manufactured from 130 to 160 tons, valued at \$30,000. In addition to this about \$8,000 worth of white lines and cord have been manufactured annually the last three years, employing about 15 workmen.

There is a large WOOL-PULLING and morocco dressing establishment in Newburyport, at which about 10000 skins are dressed annually.

THE EASTERN STAGE COMPANY runs a line of stage coaches, including the mail coach, from Boston through Newburyport to Portsmouth, beside several bye-routes. This line employs 287 horses, seventy of which are kept in Newburyport. It has 35 coaches and 12 chaises. This line is celebrated, throughout the United States, for the excellency of its horses, drivers and coaches; and for the rapidity, safety, and regularity of its movements. All the coaches are constructed in Newburyport. In the stage yard there are 25 artisans employed chiefly in the various branches of carriage making and the subsidiary trades, who manufacture 20 coaches yearly, beside chaises. There is also another chaise manufactory in Newburyport.

The manufacture of GOLD and SILVER has been carried on to some extent in this town for several years,

particularly in the articles of necklaces, thimbles, and spoons. Thirty hands are usually engaged in this business, who produce goods to the amount of 40 or 50,000 dollars.

Some beautiful specimens of the latter articles made at the establishment of the Messrs Bradbury for the order of the Hampshire, Franklin, and Hampden Agricultural Society, and distributed at Northampton last autumn in premiums, were much admired.

They have recently succeeded in the establishment of a manufactory of thimbles by machinery on an improved and original method. The mode they have invented combines durability in the commodity with facility of execution. They now manufacture them for exportation as well as domestic consumption.

The number of shops for the retail of dry goods now kept in Newburyport is about twenty two, having an aggregate capital which has been estimated at about \$30,000. The amount of capital thus invested in this town previous to the war was very much greater; but has diminished with the general decrease of business.

It is said that in 1766 there were but three shops for English goods in Newburyport. These belonged to John Harris, Tristram Dalton, and Patrick Tracy.

The tanning business is carried on successfully in the vicinity of Newburyport, particularly in the town of Newbury, where there are four tanneries which tan annually 900 hides, and 400 skins. Beside this, there is an extensive tannery in West Newbury and several in Salisbury.

The manufacture of combs is a very considerable branch of industry in West Newbury. In the manufacture of shell-combs thirty persons are employed, who make in each year 56,000 dozen of shell-combs of various sizes valued at \$140,000. In the manufacture of horn-combs, an hundred persons are employed, who make annually 43,000 dozen horn-combs, valued at \$13,000:—In all \$153,000.

CHAISES are manufactured extensively in West Newbury and Newbury. In Belleville in the town of Newbury about 100 chaises are made yearly amounting to \$13,000 in value. From sixty to seventy chaises are made

in West Newbury. There are also two large HAT manufactories in Belleville. About fifty persons are employed in West Newbury in the manufacture of SHOES.

In 1824 the number of LICENSED SHOPS was fifty four, besides five public INNS. There are now in Newburyport six APOTHECARIES' shops; six for the sale of HARDWARE OR CROCKERY; ten JEWELLERS' OR WATCH MAKERS'; five BOOKSELLERS' and stationers, of whom two are book-binders; three PRINTING offices; seven practising LAWYERS; seven PHYSICIANS; and two CIRCULATING LIBRARIES.

Of trades and arts exercised in the town, among others, are one maker of mathematical instruments, forty-five HOUSE JOINERS, eighteen BLOCK MAKERS, thirty five CABINET MAKERS, thirty four PAINTERS, six TIN MEN, thirty MASONS, eleven BAKERS, twenty BRICKMAKERS in the town and vicinity, nine CAULKERS, ten RIGGERS, twenty SAILMAKERS, five TALLOW-CHANDLERS and thirty eight BLACKSMITHS: Including, in the foregoing computation, journeymen and apprentices, as well as master workmen.

The manufacture of TOBACCO is entitled to attention. It employs more than forty hands. They manufacture the amount of FIVE TONS of snuff, and three millions five hundred thousand cigars annually.

These details might be extended further; but they will, as now made, furnish some idea of the present state of the business and trade of Newburyport. The author has introduced the mention of two or three staple manufactures of the immediate neighborhood, without, of course, pretending to make a full relation of them — Had his plan permitted, he might have given an account of the costly and extensive erections and the flourishing manufactures at the falls on Powow river in Amesbury and Salisbury, which would show that village to be emulous of the growth of Lowell, Somersworth, and Dover. But this must be reserved for another occasion.*

NEWSPAPERS.

A newspaper was first established in Newburyport in 1773, by Isaiah Thomas and Henry W. Tinges.—Mr.

* The author has made some collections towards an account of Salisbury, his native town, and of Amesbury:—which he hopes ere long to be able to complete.

Thomas then printed a weekly paper in Boston, where he resided; and of course provided the foreign news for both journals, the paper published here being under the direct care of Mr. Tinges. It was entitled **THE ESSEX JOURNAL AND MERRIMAC PACKET; OR THE MASSACHUSETTS AND NEW HAMPSHIRE GENERAL ADVERTISER.** It was printed on paper about the size of large foolscap.—No greater proof need be had of the advancement of the useful arts in this country than to compare one of these papers with the beautiful and finished newspapers of the present day. In front of the Merrimac Packet are two engravings, one a ghastly representation of the Massachusetts Indian, the other a ship of war in full sail. They are quite amusing specimens of the art.

The printing office of Thomas and Tinges stood in King (Federal) street, opposite the church of the First Presbyterian Society. The price of the paper was 'six shillings and eight pence lawful money;' which, say the printers, is 'as cheap as any newspaper in the four quarters of the globe.' The first number contains the subjoined advertisement.

PRINTING.

Those ladies and gentlemen, who are desirous of seeing the curious art of printing, are hereby informed that on Monday next the printing office will be opened for their reception, and the printers ready to wait on all, who will do the honor of their company.

December 4th 1773.

In the nineteenth number occurs this advertisement:

STAGE COACH,

That constantly plys between Newbury-port and Boston, sets out with four horses every Monday morning at 7 o'clock from Newbury-port, and arrives at Boston the same day:—Leaves Boston every Thursday morning and reaches Newbury-port the same day. * * *

It is hoped this very expensive undertaking will meet with encouragement from all Ladies and Gentlemen, as they may depend on the punctual performance,

Of the Public's most obedient humble Servant,

EZRA LUNT.

In less than a year after the commencement of the paper, Mr. Thomas relinquished it, and Ezra Lunt became joint publisher with Tinges.

In 1777 the title of the paper was changed to that of *The Essex Journal and New Hampshire Packet*, and it was published on Friday by John Mycall and H. W. Tinges.

In 1776 we find Mr Mycall sole proprietor of the paper; soon after which the price was raised to eight shillings; and the printing office removed to Water street a little below the Ferry-way.

It would appear, by an advertisement in this paper July 12th 1776 that an Insurance office was then first opened in Newburyport.

The following item of intelligence possesses permanent interest. It appears in the *Essex Journal* July 26th 1776.

‘BOSTON, July 25 — Thursday last, pursuant to the order of the honorable council, was proclaimed from the balcony of the State House in this town, the *Declaration of the American CONGRESS*, absolving the *United Colonies from their allegiance to the British Crown*, and declaring them *Free and Independent States*. There were present on the occasion, in the Council Chamber, the Committee of Council, a number of the honorable house of Representatives, the Magistrates, Ministers, Selectmen, and other gentlemen of Boston and the neighbouring towns; also the commission, and other officers of the Continental regiments, stationed here, two of which were under Arms in King Street, formed into three lines on the North side, and in thirteen divisions; likewise a detachment from the Massachusetts regiment of Artillery, with two pieces of Cannon on their right wing. At one o'clock the Declaration was proclaimed by Col. Thomas Crafts, which was received with great joy, expressed by three huzzas from a great Concourse of people, assembled on the occasion, after which, on a signal given, thirteen pieces of cannon were fired from the fort on Fort-Hill, those at Dorchester neck, the Castle, Nantasket, and Point Aberton, also discharged their Cannon: Then the detachment of Artillery discharged their cannon thirteen times, which was followed by the two regiments giving their fire from the thirteen divisions in succession. These firings corresponded to the number of the American States

United. The ceremony was closed with a proper collation to the gentlemen in the council chamber, during which, the following toasts were given by the President of the council, and heartily pledged by the company, viz.

Prosperity and perpetuity to the United States of America.

The American Congress.

The General Court of the State of the Massachusetts Bay.

General WASHINGTON, and success to the Arms of the United States.

The downfall of Tyrants and Tyranny.

The universal prevalence of civil and religious Liberty.

The friends of the United States, in all quarters of the Globe

The bells in town were rung on the occasion, and undissembled Festivity cheered and brightened every Face.

On the same evening the King's Arms, and every other Sign with any resemblance of it, whether Lyon and Crown, Pestle and Mortar and Crown, Heart and Crown &c. together with every sign that belonged to a tory, was taken down, and the latter made a general conflagration of in King-Street.

The preceding notices are introduced, as regarding the original establishment of a newspaper in the town. It is not material to follow minutely the changes which successively took place in the form of its publication, previous to 1793.

Two newspapers are now published here, The Newburyport Herald, and The Free Press.

The Herald is the successor of the *Impartial Herald*, first established in 1793. It is now published semi-weekly, on Tuesday and Friday, by Mr. Ephraim W. Allen.

The Free Press was recently established, and is published every Thursday by Mr. William L. Garrison.

An excellent and commodious reading-room for newspapers is kept by Mr. John Porter, contiguous to the office of the Commonwealth Insurance Company.

There is also a reading-room at the private insurance office of Mr. Samuel Tenney.

The following newspapers were established at different periods, but were soon discontinued.

The Morning Star in 1794 by Tucker and Robinson :

The Political Gazette in 1796 by Barrett and Farley :—

The Merrimac Gazette in 1803 by Caleb Cross :—

The Political Calendar in 1805 by Caleb Cross :—

The Merrimac Magazine in 1805 by W & J. Gilman :

The Repertory in 1804 by John Parke, which paper was the parent of the Boston Repertory :

The Merrimac Miscellany in 1805 by William B. Allen :—

The Newburyport Gazette in 1806, by Benjamin Edes :—

The Statesman in 1809, by Joseph Gleason :—

The Independent Whig in 1810, by Nathaniel H. Wright :—

The Northern Chronicler in 1824, by Heman Ladd :

And the Essex Courant in 1825, by Isaac Knapp, 3d.

DISTINGUISHED INHABITANTS.

NEWBURYPORT has just cause to regard, with honest pride, the many distinguished individuals, whose birth or residence in the town have added so much to its respectability. To do justice to her eminent sons by a complete biography of them would far transcend the limits and plan of this work. A short notice of some among them is all, which the place and occasion will warrant.

The clergymen, whose virtues and piety were displayed in the discharge of their pastoral functions here, have been commemorated already, in giving an account of their respective parishes; and they need not, of course, be again enumerated.

Delicacy forbids that the author should attempt the task, otherwise most grateful, of describing the character of living inhabitants of the town. His brief sketches will be confined to those, who have either ceased to reside among us, or whose names are consecrated by death.

THEOPHILUS BRADBURY was descended from Thomas Bradbury, a magistrate in 1650, and one of the first settlers of Salisbury. He was born in Newbury in 1739, and graduated at Harvard College in 1757. After studying law in Boston he commenced the practice of it in Portland, (then called Falmouth) in 1761.

Whilst in Falmouth he attained the reputation of an able advocate and a faithful, upright, and learned counsellor. And during this period Theophilus Parsons pursued the study of law in his office.

In 1775 Portland was burnt by com. Mowat; and soon afterwards, in 1779, Mr. Bradbury removed to Newburyport, his native town. He was at that time very falsely suspected of being unfriendly to the cause of the

country ; merely because his house in Falmouth escaped the conflagration.

In Newburyport he gradually rose to distinction in his profession and in public life. Beside many other important offices to which he was elected, he was a member of Congress under Washington's administration.

In 1797 he was appointed a justice of the Supreme Court, in which office he continued until 1803 :—soon after which he died.*

One of his sons, the late George Bradbury of Portland, represented the district of Cumberland in Congress.

STEPHEN and RALPH CROSS were among the most active and influential citizens of Newburyport. The former was born in '31, the latter in '38. They were both brought up shipwrights in the building yard of their father, Ralph Cross, opposite the bottom of Lime Street. Stephen was one of a number of his trade, who went from this place to construct a flotilla on the lakes in '56. He and his associates were made prisoners at the fall of fort Oswego and carried to Quebec and thence to France. On his return he formed a copartnership with his brother Ralph. The business of the firm was extensive. In addition to their shipbuilding, the partners were engaged in trade at home and abroad and at the commencement of the Revolution were fast becoming affluent. From the number of men in their employment, few citizens had better opportunities of conciliating general confidence. And the records of the town, which show the active part, which they took in its concerns, prove that these opportunities were not neglected. Stephen was the first selectman chosen by the town after its separation from Newbury. Both brothers entered into the cause of the revolution with spirit and determination. Both were members of the committee of safety and correspondence. Many of their letters show an intensity of interest in public concerns almost inconceivable at the present day. They speak of the commonwealth as men now speak of the affairs of their own households. Stephen was chosen one of the delegates of the town to the first Provincial Con-

* His dwelling is now owned and occupied by Mr. Robert Jenkins.

gress. Several were elected, but he and the well known Jonathan Greenleaf, whose friend and coadjutor he was during his whole life, were the only two, who accepted their appointments. He was a member of this body during most of the war, and of the General Court, that succeeded, for many years afterward. At the commencement of the revolution Ralph was a captain in the militia, commissioned by the royal Governor.—His commission is dated in 1772. He afterwards accepted one from the Provincial Congress, and signalized himself by his zeal and assiduity in training his men. In 1777 he joined the northern army as Lt. Colonel of the regiment raised in this quarter, commanded by Col. Johnson of Andover. His battalion formed part of two regiments ordered in September to advance against the garrison at Ticonderoga with the intent of taking possession of it. The enemy being reinforced, the regiments were compelled to retreat and joined the camp at Stillwater on the fourth of October. The fourth day following occurred the memorable battle, which occasioned Burgoyne's surrender. This was one of the first detachments of militia engaged in the action.—The brothers, with others, contracted with the State, and built the frigates Hancock, Boston, and Protector, and several other vessels of war. The former was built in the yard of Jonathan Greenleaf, between Bartlet and Johnson's wharves, the two last at the yard of Stephen Cross, now occupied by Titcomb and Lunt as a mast yard.

At the close of the war Stephen was appointed superintendant of the excise, and afterwards collector of the customs for the port of Newburyport. Some imputation of mismanagement, together probably with his political sentiments, caused him to be removed from the last office. Whatever it was, it did not diminish the confidence of his fellow citizens; for he was the year after his removal elected a member of the General Court, and soon after received the appointment of postmaster. In the last office he continued till he died in 1809.

Ralph also filled various honorable offices. He was for six years, from 1790 to 1796, brigadier gener-

al of the Brigade to which the corps of Newburyport were attached. He was a commissioner of bankruptcy under the bankruptlaw, and in 1802 was appointed collector of the customs. He continued in this office, performing its duties at a period of unusual difficulty with faithfulness and resolution, till his decease in 1800.*

TRISTRAM DALTON was born in Newbury in June 1738. In 1755 he was graduated at Harvard college. After pursuing the study of law for a time in Salem, he married a daughter of Robert Hooper of Marblehead, and entered into business with his father as a merchant in Newburyport. For many years he continued actively engaged in commercial pursuits; after which he was called to fill some of the most responsible offices in the State. He was a representative from Newburyport, speaker of the House of Representatives and a member of the Senate of Massachusetts, and lastly member of the Senate of the United States. When his term of office in Congress expired, he sold his estate in Essex and removed to Washington. He entered into speculations there, which, proving unfortunate, reduced him from affluence to poverty. He was appointed surveyor of Boston and Charlestown in 1815, and continued in the discharge of his official duties until his death in 1817.†

The GREENLEAFS have always been a family of great consideration in Newburyport. Three brothers of that name emigrated here from Europe. BENJAMIN, son of one of these emigrants, died in Newburyport at an advanced age in 1783, having been a representative in the legislature, and otherwise repeatedly honored with marks of the public confidence.

JONATHAN GREENLEAF, nephew of the preceding, was distinguished for his natural talents, persuasive diction, 'conciliating manners,' and 'peculiar tact' in public life. He died in Newburyport, his native place, in 1807, at the age of eighty four. He filled the office of representative from this town in the General Court for many years; where he displayed his characteristic acuteness

*The author is indebted for this account to a descendant of Ralph Cross.

† Knapp's Biograph. Sketches 315.—His house now belongs to and is occupied by Moses Brown esqr.

and practical good sense, in the important duties of the trying crisis of the revolution.

BENJAMIN GREENLEAF, cousin of Jonathan, and another nephew of the first named Benjamin, was born at this place in March 1732 and died here in January 1799.—He resided some time in Kittery ; and returned here in 1761. He held various important offices in the service of his native town, of the county, and of the commonwealth. He was member of the Executive Council of Massachusetts during the revolutionary war. He was also a member of the Senate after the adoption of the constitution ; a chief justice of the court of Common Pleas ; and for a long period Judge of Probate for the county of Essex.

STEPHEN HOOPER was the son of Stephen Hooper, a merchant of distinction in Newburyport, where the subject of this article was born in 1785 :—Soon after which time his father removed to Newbury. He was fitted for college at Dummer Academy and graduated at Cambridge in 1803. After studying law for the stated period, he was admitted to the bar, and opened an office in Newburyport.

Whilst yet a student at law he represented Newbury in the General Court at the age of 25 ; and six years afterwards he was elected a member of the Senate from the district of Essex. In these situations, although wanting in business-talents and industry, he was distinguished as an eloquent debater.

In 1818 he removed to Boston ; and devoted himself to the practise of his profession. During his residence there he was for several years an alderman of the city. He died in 1825, aged 40.*

JONATHAN JACKSON was one of the eminent patriots of Essex during the revolution and the early period of our constitutional history. He wrote some of the best political tracts of the day,—was a member of Congress, and held several offices of responsibility and honor.—He was born in Boston ; but settled here as a merchant early in life, and spent the most efficient part of it in the town. Several years before his death he removed

* Boston Monthly Mag. vol. 1.

back to Boston.* He was the near friend of the subject of the next article.

JOHN LOWELL, son of John Lowell, minister of the First Religious Society in Newburyport, was born in the part of Newbury, which afterwards became Newburyport, in 1743. He was graduated at Harvard college; and adopting the law for his profession, he settled in his native town and speedily rose to distinction. In 1776 he removed to Boston; and became representative in the General Court, and a member of the convention for framing the constitution of the State.

In 1781 he was chosen member of Congress; in 1782 he was appointed judge of the admiralty Court of Appeals; and on the establishment of the federal government was made district judge of the United States for Massachusetts. This office he filled until 1801, when he was made chief justice of the new Circuit Court for the eastern circuit. He died in 1802. He was eminent for his judgment, integrity, and eloquence as an advocate and legislator; for his impartiality, acuteness, and decision as a judge; and for his zeal in the cause of scientific and other useful institutions. He was eighteen years member of the corporation of Harvard College; and was one of the founders of the American Academy.†

The poet ROBERT TREAT PAINE studied law in Newburyport under the direction of Parsons; and whilst he resided here, pronounced his celebrated Eulogy on Washington, which, with some defects of taste, is nevertheless a very brilliant and powerful composition.

TIMOTHY PALMER has been mentioned in another part of this work. He was born in Boxford. His merit as a civil engineer was very distinguished. Besides constructing the Essex Merrimac bridge, he was much employed in similar business at the south, and in particular built a bridge across the Schuylkill at Philadelphia.

* His mansion house afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Timothy Dexter, notorious for his eccentricity, and is now used as a public inn.

† His dwelling is now owned by Mr. Eleazer Johnson. The house in which he is said to have been born, now belongs to, and is occupied by, John Fitz esq.

THEOPHILUS PARSONS, a name identified with the history of our law, laid the foundations of his eminence in Newburyport. Born in Newbury in February 1750, he received the rudiments of his education at Dummer Academy, under the celebrated master Moody.—His father, the Rev. Moses Parsons, was minister of Byfield parish in Newbury. He was graduated at Harvard college in 1769, and afterwards studied law in Falmouth, now Portland, and while there taught the grammar school in that town. He practised law there a few years; but the conflagration of the town by the British in 1775 obliged him to return to his father's house, where he met judge Trowbridge, and received the most valuable instructions from that eminent jurist.—He soon resumed the practise of his profession in this town, and rapidly rose to unrivalled reputation as a lawyer.

In 1777 he wrote the famous Essex Result, and in 1779 was an active member of the Convention, which framed the State constitution.

In 1789 he was a member of the convention for considering the present constitution of the United States, and was peculiarly instrumental in procuring its adoption.

In 1801, he was appointed attorney general of the United States, but declined accepting his commission.

In 1800, he removed to Boston. In 1806, he was appointed chief justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, and his profound legal opinions have mainly contributed to settle the principles of our expository law.

He died in Boston October 13th 1813, with reputation as a judge and a lawyer unequalled in Massachusetts.*

NICHOLAS PIKE, son of Rev. James Pike, was born in Somersworth in 1743. He was graduated at Harvard college in 1766, and taught a grammar school, first in York, afterwards in Newburyport. In 1788, he published his *System of Arithmetic*, which still deservedly sus-

* Knapp's Biog. Sketches p. 37 :—C. J. Parker's Charge, Mass. Rep. His house now belongs to Dr Oliver Prescott.

tains high reputation. He was long a distinguished acting magistrate in Newburyport, where he died in December 1819.*

The life and character of OLIVER PUTNAM have already been sketched.†

MICAJAH SAWYER, a physician of eminence, was born at Newbury in 1737, and was graduated at Harvard college in 1756. He was much distinguished in the practise of his profession and as a citizen; and died at an advanced age in 1815.

JOHN BARNARD SWETT was highly distinguished as a physician, scholar, and gentleman. He was born in this town and graduated at Harvard college in 1771; and afterwards travelled in various parts, whence he returned with a mind richly stored with professional and classical learning. He established himself in Newburyport in 1780. He died in 1796, at the age of 45, falling a sacrifice to his fidelity in the exercise of his profession during the calamitous period, when the yellow fever prevailed in Newburyport.

GEORGE THACHER, a justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, removed from Biddeford to Newburyport in 1820, on the separation of Maine from Massachusetts. He resided here until a short time before his death, which took place at Biddeford in 1824. He was born at Yarmouth in 1754 and was educated at Harvard college. He practised law for many years in Maine with great reputation and success.

He was a member of Congress for a long period, from 1788 until his appointment to the Supreme Court, in which he held a seat for more than twenty years previous to his decease.

Among the first settlers of Newbury was William Titcomb, who emigrated from Newbury in England in 1635. His grandson col. Moses Titcomb was distinguished in the expedition against Louisburg in 1745, and afterwards commanded a regiment at Crown Point in 1755, where he was killed while reconnoitring the enemies' post. Another of the descendants of William Titcomb, captain Michael Titcomb, belonged to Wash-

* New Hamp. Collec. II 143. † Antc. page 63.

ington's body guard. Two others, Enoch Titcomb and Jonathan Titcomb, deserve separate notice.

ENOCH TITCOMB was bred to mercantile pursuits, but as he advanced in life attained rank as an upright judicious public servant. He was an ardent whig; and served as a brigade major at Rhode Island, among the troops commanded by general Sullivan. Afterwards he held different town offices for many years. At the age of forty he became a member of the legislature, and continued in office, either as representative or senator, until the infirmities of age obliged him to retire into private life. He was also for a long time a justice of the peace and a notary public. Without possessing brilliant talents, he was yet estimable for his piety, integrity, and good sense. He died in 1814, aged 62.

JONATHAN TITCOMB was distinguished as an ardent and zealous whig during the revolution. He commanded a regiment of militia under general Sullivan upon the Rhode Island expedition, and afterwards became a brigadier general. In 1774-75 he was a member of the Committee of Safety, and belonged to the first General Court after the British evacuated Boston.

Subsequently he represented the town in General Court for several years; and was chosen to the Convention for framing the constitution of the State.

He was appointed by Washington the first naval officer in this District, which place he held from 1789 to 1812.

He died in 1817, at the advanced age of 89.

NATHANIEL TRACY was a merchant of liberal education, who graduated at Harvard college in 1769. He afterwards transacted business upon an extensive scale in this, his native town, and was distinguished for his patriotism, liberality of character, refinement of manners, and hospitality.*

Beside these men, who, by reason of their profession, their situation, or the offices they held, rightly are esteemed public property, many others might be mentioned, highly distinguished for their private virtues.

* His mansion-house now belongs to and is occupied by James Prince esq.

William Coombs, and others will long be gratefully remembered by their fellow citizens, for that dignity of character as men and as merchants, which exalted the name and the fortunes of Newburyport in the nation.

Newburyport has proved, but too frequently, the nursery of talented men, who have emigrated elsewhere for the enjoyment of more liberal rewards than its means afford. Of the many individuals, whose fortunes illustrate this remark, KING, PERKINS, JACKSON, WHITE, KNAPP, and PIERPONT are living examples. Three of these have attained reputation so pre-eminent as to sanction the introduction of a short account of their lives in this place.

CHARLES JACKSON, the son of Jonathan Jackson, was born in Newburyport in 1775. He was graduated at Cambridge in 1793; and after studying the science of law under Parsons, went into practise in Newburyport. His eminent natural qualifications for success in his profession, and his untiring industry and devotedness in the discharge of its duties, drew to him the public confidence at an early age. He quickly rose to the front ranks of the bar, and became second only to his great master in forensic distinction. Shortly before the latter was raised to the bench, he removed to Boston, and supplied, as no other person could do, the vacancy in practise left by his withdrawal from the profession.

He continued sedulously engaged in the highest and best legal business of the State until 1813, when, upon the death of Theodore Sedgwick, he was appointed to be a justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts.

To ascribe to him the highest character in this new station would only be to repeat the unanimous voice of the bar and the public. His were not merely the ordinary points of judicial excellence. Industry,—impartiality,—patience,—acuteness,—juridical erudition, were qualities, which he exhibited in no common degree.—But the depth, clearness, and comprehension of his views were still more remarkable. His earnest devotedness to the functions of his station affected his health so seriously, that, in 1823, he went abroad to regain it, resigning his office. In England he was honored with

the respect and confidence of lord Stowell, and other eminent jurists.

In 1824 he returned to this country, and has now resumed the practise of his profession in Boston as counsel.

RUFUS KING was born at Scarborough in Maine. He received his first degree at Harvard college in 1777; and immediately began the study of law in Newburyport under the care of Theophilus Parsons. On completing his studies, he was admitted to the bar in Essex County, and opened an office in this town.

His great talents speedily raised him to distinction in his profession and in politics. A few years after commencing practice, he was chosen to represent the town in the General Court of Massachusetts; soon after which he was elected a member of Congress under the old confederation.

Thenceforth his progress to eminence was rapid and sure. He soon removed to the state of New York; and received continual marks of public confidence. Without attempting to give an accurate and detailed account of the various stations he filled, it is sufficient to say that, after a distinguished career in Congress, he was in 1796 appointed minister plenipotentiary to the court of St. James by general Washington.

Mr. King acted in this capacity until 1803. Although a change in the administration had, in the mean time, taken place at home, his conduct was nevertheless such as in a great measure to gain the approbation of both parties. He discussed in a full and satisfactory manner all the questions of maritime law, in which America was interested. To the subject of impressment he paid particular attention, and made great progress in securing an arrangement, which would have contributed essentially to the protection of our seamen.

Mr. King, after his return, continued attached to the federal party. But although opposed to the measures of Mr. Madison, yet, like Samuel Dexter, he supported the government during the war.

After the restoration of peace, he received the suffrages of the legislature of New York for the office of senator in Congress. He remained in the station until

1825, when he was a second time appointed minister to Great Britain.

Having resigned this office on account of his declining health, he has lately returned to America, being succeeded by Albert Gallatin.

JACOB PERKINS was born at Newburyport July 9th 1766. His father, Matthew Perkins, was a lineal descendant of one of the first settlers of Ipswich and lived to the advanced age of ninety. After receiving a common school education, he became apprentice to a goldsmith; and soon displayed those extraordinary inventive powers in mechanics, which have elevated him to distinction.

At the age of twenty one, he was employed, when others artists had failed, to make dies for the copper coinage of Massachusetts under the old confederation.

At twenty four he invented the nail machine, which cut and headed nails at one operation.

His mechanical genius was now fully developed; and for twenty years and upwards, he continued to multiply useful inventions in the arts with a facility truly astonishing. His ingenuity in making a plate for bank notes incapable of being counterfeited, and in discovering the art of softening and hardening steel at pleasure, was particularly useful to the public. The latter discovery opened a wide field for the labors of the engraver and led to many happy results.

It would be endless to recount the great number of useful or ingenious inventions, which he was constantly producing during the latter part of his residence in America. His talents found, for a time, a wider field for their display in Philadelphia, whither he removed from Newburyport. After residing there several years, he crossed the Atlantic, and is now exercising his genius in England,—the great theatre for the exhibition and encouragement of abilities like his. Besides many things of merely philosophical interest, which he has there been teaching to the teachers of the world, he has also made some signal improvements in the steam-engine, the great mechanical agent of modern times. His inventions in the arts of engraving and in calico-printing, among other things, have been success-

fully put in operation;—while his genius, and his urbanity of deportment and simplicity of character are procuring him the admiration and esteem of the wisest men and greatest nobles of Britain.

Among the many persons, who, attracted by the fame of Parsons in jurisprudence, came to Newburyport to study law under his direction, JOHN QUINCY ADAMS was one. He was endeared to the inhabitants at that time by his promising talents and social excellences in youth, as he has been since admired in manhood for the noble qualities of ripened age. On a recent occasion he spoke feelingly of Newburyport as ‘a town, from which long absence had not obliterated many of the most pleasing recollections of his youth associated with it.’ The temporary residence of such a man here for the purposes of education, is too proud a circumstance in the history of the town to have been overlooked.

The contemplation of the lives and characters of the many eminent persons, whose permanent or temporary residence in Newburyport reflects honor upon the town, should serve to stimulate and quicken a praiseworthy ambition in the breasts of those, who come after them. One thing in particular connected with this point deserves attention, as equally to the credit of the individuals and of the town. In selecting persons for public confidence, the citizens, on the one hand, have, in several signal instances, manifested indifference alike to the age and station of the party, looking only to his absolute qualifications. And among the most eminent inhabitants of the town, it is remarkable, on the other hand, how large a proportion of them have been distinguished early in life.—Lowell, Parsons, King, Jackson, Perkins, and (if we may be permitted to claim any share in his fame) Adams, by their industry, useful talents, devotion to business, and precocious manliness of character, obtained either professional distinction, or public honors, or both, even in their very youth. Is it not probable that the candor and discrimination displayed by the town in the illustrious cases above mentioned entitle it to the credit of some portion of the eminence of those individuals? Had their merit been suffered to pass unnoticed,—had they been condemned for their youth

alone—their subsequent rise might have been long retarded. Nay it might, perhaps, have been prevented forever. Had they pined away in neglect in early life, who can say how different would have been their future fate? Besides, the mere fact of their being so soon the objects of public confidence gave them the benefit of experience and practical knowledge at a period of life, when hope was high, and the pulse beat freely and confidently in the ardor of juvenile feelings and purposes. Thus they acquired a start in the race, an impetus at the commencement of their career, of which they may long have enjoyed the advantage. It was the quaint saying of a great writer that there were some men, whose abilities were born with them, some men, who achieved abilities; and a third set, upon whom abilities were thrust*. How fortunate are they, in whom, as in the individuals in question, these three conditions of ability meet! For it needs hardly be added here, that, in after life, they continued to prove that the public confidence was not misplaced;—and their country found cause of rejoicing in their early advancement. May their fame be a light in the path of rising generations!

* *Tomline's Life of Pitt*, vol. 1, p. 219.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THE chief aim of the author, in this work, is narrative, and not speculation. But, in approaching the conclusion of it, he craves indulgence for a few remarks connected with a topic most interesting to him and to his fellow citizens, namely, the condition and prospects of the town. He claims no authority for his reflections upon this subject; and submits them only as the solitary opinions of an individual, having but limited means of observation.

The rise of Newburyport to wealth and consequence was extremely rapid. This elevation was not capable of being ascribed entirely, or for the greater part, to intrinsic, local, or peculiar sources of prosperity. As observed in a previous chapter, we had not the extraordinary advantage, which New Orleans and New York possess, of being the natural depot of an immense interior country of unexampled fertility and richness. There were no inexhaustible coal mines wrought in the town or its vicinity, as at Birmingham or Manchester, to facilitate the establishment of manufactories. Nor had we, within our narrow six hundred acres of territory, the waterfalls of the Patucket or the Powow, to be subjected, by human art, to the noblest objects of human convenience, industry, and happiness. Our peculiar local advantages extended but little beyond the single business of ship-building.

From what, then, sprung the prosperous energies and the speedy increase of the town, in its best days?—They arose, it is believed, *mainly*, from the address, enterprise, and good fortune of its citizens, in seizing upon the propitious opportunities afforded by the situation of the United States. Newburyport rose with the commercial rise of the county, and with that alone kept

even pace. True it is, that the town stood somewhat in advance, in the celerity of its progress, of the nation at large; and this advancement, it is repeated, we must attribute to the character of its inhabitants,—which their staple manufacture contributed to develope. Their success was in maritime commerce, and in the arts subsidiary to, and dependant upon, maritime commerce.—And their skill in ship-building, created by their local advantage for that manufacture, empowered them the more easily to gain the start of other places in marine trade. For this business had enabled them to accumulate some capital. It made it easy, also, with a very small expense of outfit, to obtain a bottom for the transportation of goods. And by placing the means of foreign commerce constantly before the eyes of the people, in the shape of their staple product, it naturally tempted them the more to adventure in maritime speculations.

Thus matters stood, so long as the wonderful commercial prosperity of this country lasted. During this period, when the neutral position of America was so extraordinary, so unparalleled in the history of commerce, our citizens pushed their advantage to the utmost. The profits of commerce were immense. We had the carrying trade of the whole universe, almost, in our hands. Our proximity to the European colonies in America co-operated, with other things, to fill the horn of our abundance to overflowing. The industrious mechanic of the Merrimac found a demand for his manufacture:—the enterprising merchant could obtain his vessel on easy terms, and in a very short period she would earn her whole original cost. All the departments of industry connected with the ocean were thus stimulated to the highest degree, and universal prosperity and the easy acquisition of a competence, were the natural result.

France and England soon became jealous of this our rapid approach to the very empire of the seas and the monopoly of marine commerce. Previous to this, however, our trade to the French islands had begun to decline. The business was overdone by competition.—Their markets became drugged with our produce, as,

indeed, they have continued to be ever since. They began to be more directly supplied with foreign manufactures, thereby diminishing the profits of our commerce with Europe. And no slight injury was sustained by our commerce, in consequence of the disorders in the West Indies occasioned by the French revolution.

But the deadly blow to our commercial prosperity was more directly struck by the insolence and cupidity of the great belligerents of Europe. Without entering into the broad question whether the system of restrictions on our commerce adopted by the government was or was not vindicated by the issue, thus much may be confidently affirmed: our government was forced into it by the injustice of foreign powers. It was a choice of evils. England,—France,—Holland,—Naples,—Denmark,—were committing the most flagitious depredations upon the property of our citizens. They were heaping insult upon insult, and injury upon injury.—They were sweeping our ships from the ocean with fearful rapacity, and profligate disregard of every law, divine or human. This it was, which drove our government into that series of restrictive measures, finally terminated in war. During that calamitous period, our seamen were thrown out of employment; our traders lost their customers; the farmers, who had looked to us for foreign commodities, and of whom we had purchased lumber, and provisions, left our market,—and our merchants were compelled to sit down idly and see their ships rotting in the docks.* True it is that, had the uncalculating enterprise of our capitalists been left to itself, their ships and property would have been captured or confiscated abroad; and the millions of our foreign claims would have been swelled incalculably; but, in either alternative, the loss must have been, as it was, deplorable.

In the midst of all these misfortunes came the fire of 1811, which destroyed a great amount of our property, and diverted too much of what remained from more profitable channels into the form of buildings. But a conflagration, destructive as it may be of property, is

* Newburyport Herald, June 13th 1823.

not of a nature to produce any permanent injury to the prosperity of a town. The skill, the talents, the industry, which reared the piles, devoured by the flames, are capable of soon repairing the damage by a little added exertions. Of course, the fire could have had but partial influence, in producing the decline of Newburyport. The genuine difficulty to be solved, the question really needing an answer, is, why Newburyport did not resume its prosperity, and continue to rise, when all the temporary causes of misfortune alluded to had ceased to operate. We shall not find the explanation of this point in the fire of 1811, nor in the embargo, nor in the war. It is to be sought further. New-York and Boston have grown as rapidly since the pressure of those restrictions on commerce was taken off, as they did before. But various circumstances contributed to retard the increase of Newburyport, as is usual in similar cases.

Some of these were local. Thus the bar is undoubtedly some impediment to our prosperity,—because it confines our navigation to vessels of the smaller class; and, contrary to what was customary twenty years ago, the present exigencies of foreign trade require the use of large vessels. The falls and rapids in the Merrimac are also a local difficulty. They deprive us of the benefit of supplying with heavy goods the inhabitants of the interior along the river, above the actual head of navigation. The business of these persons is diverted, by means of the Middlesex canal, from Newburyport, its natural resort, to Boston. This disadvantage might be remedied, in a great degree, by the completion of the long talked of canal around the remaining obstructions in the bed of the Merrimac.

Every small sea-port competes, to great disadvantage, with any large one near to it. The greatest market will inevitably tend to swallow up others in its vicinity. This law of trade has undoubtedly operated to the serious injury of Newburyport. Like other sea-ports of the second class in Massachusetts bay, it has withered under the influence of Boston. There are but few exceptions to this remark, and those exceptions confirm the rule. Thus New-Bedford and Nantucket are sustained

by their possession of the whale-fishery, Salem, also, had its advantage in the East India trade, so long as that continued peculiarly lucrative. But the bad effects of the vicinity of Boston are constantly and seriously experienced here, in leading the importer to make sales of large cargoes, or heavy goods, almost universally in Boston; and the retailer to resort there for his supplies.

Within the last fifteen years, many other towns along the sea-coast of New England have entered into competition with this, in what formerly constituted a very important part of its business, namely, the exportation of lumber and fish, and the carriage of the products of the West Indies to a market. The competition has, of course, in all cases diminished the profits. And Portland and other places in Maine can export lumber at less charge than ourselves, and therefore to greater advantage.

All these different causes have their influence. But the most efficient and comprehensive reason of the decline of the town is, in truth, the immense alteration of the general condition of business during the last fifteen years. The whole of Europe, with the exception of its extreme eastern regions, is in a state of peace. We are no longer the carriers for its many nations. The sphere of our commercial enterprise is wonderfully narrowed. Our capital is now driven into new channels, and the entire circle of the relations of business and trade has undergone a radical revolution. Foreign commerce now requires a larger capital than formerly, and the profits on it are less. We are beginning to perceive and appreciate the importance of encouraging and protecting domestic industry, for the most substantial reasons; and if we did not, the impossibility of employing all the resources of the country in commerce would force open our eyes to see the necessity of investing a portion of it in manufactures. Here, then, we lose our population, whilst other towns gain it. Boston, for instance, by reason of the immense accumulation of wealth in the hands of its inhabitants, becomes, by the laws of political economy, a permanent market as well for domestic manufactures and products, as for imported articles. Amesbury, Lowell, Dover, are the site of vast manufac-

factories, and thither our mechanics and traders emigrate, following the concentration of capital, wherever it takes place. But we, on the other hand, have neither natural sites for manufactories, nor that immense accumulation of riches, which should secure to us, at present, the means of successful competition with any of those places, to which the recent revolutions in the conduct of business have imparted such great accession of wealth or population.

If these remarks are entitled to any weight, they may serve to reconcile us to the diminution of population and of taxable property, which a comparison of the state of the town in 1810 and 1829 exhibits, by showing that it was inevitable. No efforts of our own could have prevented it. Some injudicious kinds of trade were, it is true, entered upon by the citizens on the restoration of peace, whose unprofitableness ere long was discovered and caused them to be abandoned. And had the canal been constructed when it was originally projected, it would have undoubtedly enlarged our trade, and might also have been used advantageously for the location of manufactories. But these things were not the great causes of the check in our prosperity. For after all, the present condition of the town is by no means a state of decline. It has not now the riches, the population, or the business, which it once possessed. But it is no worse off than many other seaports on the New-England coast of the same general description. And its actual state is not so much a state of decline, as of slow and gradual, but sure, consolidation and advancement. We Americans, and especially we New-Englanders, are an enterprising, restless, impatient race. We are not content with living, or living well with long continued industry, as in the old countries. We are ambitious to make large fortunes, and to make them quickly, and as it were *extempore*. Our national and individual energies have been evoked by a sort of unnatural and hot-bed process of developement. And while the inhabitants of Newburyport have, in a most remarkable manner, at a former period, been thus hurried on to prosperity, they can the less easily accommodate themselves to a stationary condition, or one of mere simple well-being.

But the author feels admonished that these remarks have been pursued at sufficient length. It is more grateful to inquire how the town might be enabled to regain its ancient standing. But there is no royal road, no convenient short cut, to national wealth or public prosperity. It is pleasing to reflect, as stated in a preceding chapter, that while some occupations are in a less thriving state than formerly, yet others are much improved. The fisheries and the coast-wise trade of the town, departments of industry every way preferable, in respect to questions of political economy, over foreign commerce, have steadily gained upon the latter, in profitableness and in amount of tonnage. To be speedily restored to its old prosperity, some great revolution must take place, either in external affairs, or in the internal resources of the town. Such a revolution in foreign affairs is a most improbable event. But the creation of sites for manufactories in the place, or the establishment here of any species of manufacture which do not require the application of water-power, would produce a revolution in the internal resources of Newburyport. Whether such a thing is practicable or not is too wide an inquiry to be pertinent or otherwise proper in this connexion. But the facility and usefulness of extending the manufacture of vessels are too prominent and obvious to pass unnoticed, in any consideration of the means of stimulating our domestic industry by adequate rewards.

It deserves, also, to be mentioned here, that Newburyport possesses uncommon advantages for annuitants and for all persons living upon small capital or upon fixed incomes. It unites the benefits of town and country. Its population, being considerable and compact, is suited for social intercourse, and for all the purposes of the concentration of mankind into towns. It possesses the means of easy and direct communication to the sea, to the interior, and to the remotest parts of the United States, east, west, or south. It is but five hours ride from the capital of New-England. Living is remarkably cheap, because being the market-town of a considerable agricultural district, and lying contiguous to the ocean, there is hardly an article of taste or necessity

whose price is enhanced to the inhabitants by land-encroachment. In addition to this, the lowness of rents removes the greatest item of expense which is incurred in Boston, and other towns in similar situation. So that for the retired man of business, or for persons living upon salary, to whom ease, respectability, and economy are primary objects, few places are more deserving of recommendation than Newburyport.

The moral and pious character of the inhabitants, their simple and unpretending manners, the neatness and salubrity of the town, and the excellence of school and religious education within itself or in its immediate vicinity, are topics, in relation to which merited praise could be bestowed upon the town. But if the author dwell on them he might subject himself to the imputation of partiality; and he therefore abstains.

The true policy of communities, whether large or small, like the best interest of individuals, is to cultivate industry, economy, regularity, temperance, and the higher principles of virtue, and to obey the dictates of pure religion. Without this policy, all advantages of locality, or circumstances, or fortune, and all the accumulated blessings of the richest soil, the healthiest climate, and the most transcendent bounties of nature, are utterly unavailing to confer prosperity upon a nation, a state, or a town. And with this policy, every thing else is easy of accomplishment. The most sterile soil may be converted into a garden, and the wilderness caused 'to bloom as a rose.' Commerce, the arts, literature, may be made to pour forth their golden streams of plenty, and comfort, and refinement, to enrich the land. For there is a secret of public welfare, which political economy does not teach. It lies at the foundation of every prosperous community, and it is capable of retrieving the most adverse fortunes. Though it be not learned in the schools, the fate of empires and the destinies of mankind impress it visibly upon the face of the universe.—It is an availing obedience to the lessons of morality and piety. Be this the noble aim, then, of all our actions.

To conclude, let us repeat the words of one of the

greatest men and purest patriots, whom this or any other country has known :

‘ Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe ; too high minded to endure the degradations of the others ; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation ; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense of them ; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practised in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man ; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which by all its dispensations proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, and his greater happiness hereafter : with all these blessings what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people ?’

APPENDIX.

TOWN OFFICERS FOR 1826.

Selectmen, Messrs. Asa W. Wildes, Samuel S. Plummer, Whittingham Gilman, Green Sanborn, John Cook, jr.
Town Clerk, John Fitz.

Assessors, Messrs. Samuel Cutler, John Moody, Joseph Brown, jr.

Overseers of the Poor, Messrs. Philip Johnson, jr. Edmund Bartlet, Joseph Brown, jr. Olin Boardman, John Moody.

Treasurer & Collector, John Porter.

School Committee, Messrs. Nathan Noyes, Ebenezer Shillaber, Nathaniel Bradstreet, Stephen W. Marston, Caleb Cushing, John Fitz, John Coffin. Henry Johnson, Asa W. Wildes.

Firewards, Messrs. Abraham Williams, George Jenkins, Joshua Greenleaf, Moses Kent, Isaac Knap, William Davis, Eleazer Johnson, Zebedee Cook, William Cross, Edmund Bartlet, Nathaniel Marsh, Joseph Hale, Philip Coombs, Eliphalet Brown, Olin Boardman, William Hervey, Jeremiah Brown, Pardon Boockway, John Chickering, Eleazer Johnson, jr. William Cook, Philip Johnson, jr., Nathan Follansbee, Ebenezer Bradbury, Isaac Knap, jr.

Surveyors of Lumber, Messrs. John Stickney, Moody Pearson, Jacob Stickney, Amos Pearson, Obadiah Horton, John Flanders, Moses Coffin, Amos Pearson, jr. Tristram Coffin, jr. John Carr, Joshua Hills, John Cooper, Tristram Coffin, 3rd. Edward Toppan, William Hervey, Zebedee Cook, John Moody, Thomas Hervey, Jeremiah Brown, Jonathan Pearson, William Alexander, George T. Granger, Moses Somerby, Joseph Hoyt, Abner Toppan.

Fence Viewers, Messrs. Amos Pearson, Daniel Somerby, Moses Kent.

Fishwards, Messrs. Olin Boardman, John Cook, Robert Cross.

Cullers of Hoops and Staves, Messrs. John Lewis, jr. Samuel Bradbury, William Davis, Thomas Patten, jr.

Cullers of Fish, Messrs. John Mace, Pardon Brockway.

Field Drivers, Moses Somerby, Charles Toppan.

Hogreeves, Messrs. Daniel C. Johnson, William P. Lunt, William Randall.

Tythingmen, Messrs. Edward Woodbury, Stephen Tilton, William Hervey, Stephen Frothingham, Obadiah Horton, Enoch Smith, Ebenezer Stone, Charles H. Balch, Tristram Chase, Charles Whipple, Daniel Foster, Nathaniel Bayley, Ezekiel Bartlet, William Carr.

Police Officer, Gilman White.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Samuel S. Wilde, | Oliver Prescott, |
| James Prince. | William Woart, |
| Jonathon Gage, | William B. Banister, |
| Ebenezer Moseley, | John Fitz, |
| Josiah Smith, | William Cross, |
| William Bartlet, | John Pettingell, |
| Moses Brown, | John Greenleaf, |
| Isaac Adams, | Thomas M. Clark, |
| Samuel Tenney, | Asa W. Wildes, |
| Andrew Frothingham, | Stephen W. Marston, |
| Elmad S. Reed, | John Porter. |
| Solomon H. Currier, | John Cook, jr. |
| Ebenezer Shillaber, | Caleb Cushing. |

NOTARIES PUBLIC.

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| John Fitz, | Samuel Tenney, |
| John Porter, | William Woart, |
| Daniel Foster, | |

CUSTOM HOUSE.

Collector, James Prince,

Surveyor, William Cross.

Naval Officer, Thomas Carter,

Deputy Collector, Solomon H. Carrier.

POSTMASTER.

Moses Lord.

MEMBERS OF GENERAL COURT.

Senate, Caleb Cushing,
Representatives, John Coffin,
 Robert Cross.

CLERGYMEN.

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Rev. James Morss, | John Andrews, D.D. |
| Samuel P. Williams, | Luther F. Dimmick, |
| Charles W. Milton, | Daniel Dana, D. D. |
| Josiah Houghton. | |

PHYSICIANS.

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Oliver Prescott, | Nathan Noyes. |
| Francis Vergnies, | Nathaniel Bradstreet, |
| Jonathan G. Johnson, | Richard S. Spofford, |
| Samuel Wyman, | John Brickett, |

LAWYERS.

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Ebenezer Moseley, | Jacob Gerrish. |
| Stephen W. Marston, | Asa W. Wildes, |
| Ebenezer Shillaber, | Caleb Cushing, |
| Robert Cross. | |

ERRATA.

Page 2, line 27 for ten read twelve; p. 8, l. 6 for 1775 read 1774;
 p. 36, l. 7. The chain-bridge was built under the direction of Dr John
 Templeman, formerly of Boston. The first bridge in 1792 was built by
 Mr. Palmer. p. 98, l. 7 for 1800 read 1811.

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